

BETWEEN EXCHANGE AND RECIPROCITY: THE POLITICS OF WILDLIFE  
CONSERVATION IN BOTSWANA AND AGRICULTURAL DIVERSIFICATION IN  
ZAMBIA

By

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by

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To Sarojini and Naintara for believing that it was possible.

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This dissertation presents a comparative study about the changing nature and use of informal relations and institutions—the contested domain of culturally embedded practices, norms, and values—in conservation and development. It illustrates how informal institutions matter and under what circumstances they lend themselves toward fulfilling the goals of—resource management, community empowerment, and equitable material development in Botswana’s Okavango Delta and Zambia’s Eastern Province.

The dissertation argues that the infusion of market and state logics is often incomplete and older logics of social organization can become the raw materials for the creation of new institutional practices. Market integration, in a context of state withdrawal or decentralization of decision-making, generates new relationships among community, market and state actors, has diverse impacts on collective action arrangements, social exchange patterns, and nature and mobilization of social trust.

By contrasting the trajectories of state building and consolidation, the dissertation traces divergent local institutional responses to imposed market driven and community centered resource management strategies. The continuities in Botswana's statist developmental project contrasts with the discontinuities in Zambia. With its blend of developmentalism evident in a reasonably well managed national economy that relies on diamond wealth and authoritarian tendencies, Botswana's high-modernist state tends to encapsulate and capture local practices under official ideologies of development thus stifling of local empowerment at least in the short-term. State building in Zambia initially exemplified its official ideology of "humanism" has in recent years has regressed into a factionalized unstable multi-party system. Following the implementation of structural adjustment policies, informal relations are increasingly important to solve collective problems and community approaches provide an opportunity for local improvisation. But in the absence of an effective state they tend to be captured and manipulated by local elites.

The findings presented in this study engage recent scholarship that from a variety of variety of epistemological and methodological perspectives has re-converged on informal institutions and deepens our theoretical understanding of the social embeddedness of the state (and also the market). At the same time, the articulations evident in this work between formal and informal institutions helps us specify the precise ways in which culture and tradition bound choice and preference formation.

## CHAPTER 1

### MARKETS, STATES AND COMMUNITIES: THE POLITICS OF EMBEDDEDNESS AND INFORMALITY

Twentieth century development strategies are often summarized as a clash between states and markets. At the end of the Second World War, Keynesian thinking held sway, which called for states to guide economies by replacing absent and imperfect markets. Contrary to this, the *laissez-faire* approach viewed the state as the source of problems, and once it stepped out of the way, markets themselves would lead to effective resource allocation. The fall of the Soviet Union provided an impetus to cast aside the state in favor of “unhampered markets.”

The neoliberal Washington consensus focused on macroeconomic “distortions” in economies to address fiscal imbalances and misguided monetary policies. In neoliberalism’s narrow interpretation, development was viewed as a structural problem requiring technical solutions of trade and pricing policies and better macroeconomic frameworks. The fundamental problem of the pro-market neoliberal approach was its inability to grapple with the interface between economy and society. By focusing on privatization and deregulation, it disregarded the crucial role of the institutional infrastructure, the domain of culturally embedded practices, norms, and values. Not surprisingly these “reforms” have had mixed results. While the experience of the Asian Tigers challenged market fundamentalism by showing that states have a critical role to play in development, the severe impact on the poor and marginal of many societies, especially those in Africa, make the neoliberal Washington Consensus a cautionary tale.

The fracture in the neoliberal consensus in recent years has (re)turned our attention to understanding the role of formal state and markets and its relationship to society (or the informal realm). Douglass North (1990) has pointed out that neoclassical approaches and their counterpart in neoliberalism take the existence of markets and states as a given. They are unable to shed light on more critical questions: Where do markets or states come from historically? Why do they march forward in some cases and not in others?

The issue thus is more than a concern about whether “markets work their magic” or whether “states dominate the commanding heights of an economy.” Instead, there is a need to decompose markets and states by distinguishing actors from institutions. Individual actors operate with complex “mental maps” that take into consideration influences from more than one institution, be that market or state, and often tend to rely on informal rules and practices. Development interventions, whether state centered or market oriented, bring with them formal structures that are re-read and modified by local practices—informal institutions.<sup>1</sup> Commitments and obligations toward formal organizational structures cannot be understood by examining the formally stated elements

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<sup>1</sup> Many social science concepts gain prominence for a few years then losing importance, only to be resurrected and used in new ways to address contemporary issues. “Informal institution” is one such concept. The terms “informalization” and “informal institutions” have been closely related. In the late 1960s, policy makers in developing countries became aware of economic activities and exchanges that were taking place outside the purview of official state rules and accounting systems. Thus, the ideas of informal institutions and informalization were used to characterize economic transactions and behavior because of the inability or unwillingness of states to ensure compliance with its rules. In an era where the state was considered to be the main engine for growth and the focus was on the state to bring about development, the informal economy—the squatter settlements of Rio and New Delhi, the street hawkers in Lagos and Nairobi, the “underground” market in Russia—were all initially thought (especially from the perspective of state officials) to be regressive and would have to be regularized. In this “dual economy thesis” the process of informalization was an attribute of the periphery, linked with a marginalized sector and pitted against the formal sector (Hart 1973; Portes et al. 1989; Tabak and Crichlow 2000). However, the notion of “informality” is now considered useful for addressing the problematique of development, state formation, and marketization. Informal institutions can substitute and complement where the formal market and state structures are “absent” (Levistky and Helmke 2004). Sometimes even though the concept of “informal institution” is not used, similar empirical processes are identified by substituting “informal institutions” with other concepts such as “informal constraints” and “norms” and “social capital.”

of these structures, but rather by paying closer attention to the recurrent institutionalized patterns of interpersonal interactions of everyday life and social action in which these structures are enmeshed. The emerging consensus thus is that informal institutions seen in ongoing social norms, relationships, customs and conventions are crucial and often indispensable, whether they support or detract from the goals of development interventions. Certain informal institutions such as patron-clientelism and patronage networks may conflict with goals of formal (state and market) institutions, while others can provide a basis for legitimacy that is often not afforded to the formal realm.<sup>2</sup>

Indeed, the informal realm has causal significance in explaining political and economic outcomes and shaping development outcomes.<sup>3</sup> Processes of embedding draw attention to the informal institutional infrastructure or “informal realm” of trust, norms, social capital, and community and also allow us to “bring culture/society back” by conceptually integrating economic and cultural institutional explanations. Recognizing that informal institutions matter, however, is not sufficient on its own. Informal institutions interact and articulate with imposed formal market and state institutions in different and often unexpected ways and the processes of social embedding of the market and state can take different forms. Informal institutions matter, but we also must understand *how and under what circumstances* informal institutions matter.

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<sup>2</sup> The emergence of an informal economy where there is societal noncompliance with the state, and challenges to state norms of fairness and economic justice is a common example of such instances of institutional subversion. In these circumstances, dense adversarial relations with state agents would characterize the institutional environment. (Tripp 1997).

<sup>3</sup> In the past two decades, political scientists who had previously privileged the study of formal institutions (such as constitutions, party systems, courts, electoral rules, and bureaucracies) have begun to address, from a variety of epistemological positions and using a range of methodological tools, the notion of “informality” in a variety of empirical domains. Informal institutions, for example in the form of social capital, can be complementary and support the functioning of formal institutions. Informal institutions such as patron-clientelism and patronage networks, on the other hand, may conflict with goals of formal (state and market) institutions.

This dissertation will demonstrate the power and politics of informal institutions and how they affect the goals of conservation and development—resource management, community empowerment, and equitable material development. In the two settings identified in Chapter 2, the Okavango Delta in Botswana and Eastern Province in Zambia, specifically, it will seek to answer the following questions: How are informal institutions mobilized and (re)deployed for development? To what extent and under what conditions do informal institutions hinder the aims and objectives of contemporary development approaches in Botswana and Zambia? Under what circumstances do articulations between imposed formal and informal institutions become the basis for innovation and adaptation and can be supportive of imposed formal market and state institutions?

Since the early 1990s, policy reforms in both Botswana and Zambia have sought to realign the rules and responsibilities of conservation and development between the state, market actors and rural communities. Community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) in Botswana attempted to integrate wildlife management, rural development and tourism. The shift to a bottom-up community-based approach, to some extent, resulted from the experience gained from the failures of previous “top-down,” “fortress” approaches in Botswana and elsewhere in southern Africa. The argument was that unless material incentives from wildlife utilization accrued to communities, conservation would be an uphill task. In Botswana’s CBNRM model communities were supposed to collaborate with private safari operators to manage natural resources of the Okavango Delta and to share economic returns from wildlife hunting and tourism.



Community-based projects in Zambia attempted to propagate alternative soil fertility systems for farmers without access to fertilizers or credit to improve their maize production. The key goals of these agroforestry projects was to encourage individual farmers to adopt new agricultural techniques, such as improved fallows (IF), that would enhance soil fertility and reduce dependence on chemical fertilizers. The shift to community-based approaches in Zambia took place, to some extent, as a response to structural adjustment policies. Prior to structural adjustment the state directly coordinated markets by setting prices and controlling inputs and distribution. It was the partial dismantling of the Zambian state that has brought to fore the need to transfer decision making to the local level.

Botswana and Zambia have had distinctly different development experiences, especially in the last two decades, and thus provide a useful backdrop for a discussion of the role of informal institutions in conservation and development. Empirically, the dissertation will discuss how institutions matter and under what circumstances. Through a series of discrete accounts it will explore the changing nature and use of informal relations and institutions in the context of market integration and state withdrawal or decentralization in Eastern Zambia and Northern Botswana. Each account will highlight specific ways through which state and market structures become embedded in informal institutional and cultural patterns of African communities.

The aforementioned research issues are elaborated in the rest of the chapter. The theoretical section below provides an overview of the debates and the approach taken by this study. I begin by situating the discussion of informal institutions in the contemporary debate following the collapse of the Washington Consensus. This debate

pertains to the framing of informal institutions within neoinstitutional economics as well as the resurgence of social capital. This is followed by a discussion of embeddedness approaches that have elaborated on Karl Polanyi's scholarship (1957) as well as "network" oriented approaches, both sharing the assumption that markets (and states) are socially constituted. While these approaches have only recently begun to account for informality, Africanists have long argued that social logic in African societies is driven by the notion of "investment in social relations" articulated through lineage modes of production. I conclude the section by highlighting the "open-ended" nature of informal institutions.

### **Moving Beyond The Neoliberal Washington Consensus?**

In the modern Western world, we think of life and the economy as being ordered by formal laws and property rights. Yet formal rules, even in the most developed economy, make up a small (although very important) part of the sum of constraints that shape choices; a moment's reflection should suggest to us the pervasiveness of informal constraints. In our daily interaction with others, whether within the family, its external social relations or in business activities, the government structure is overwhelmingly defined by codes of conduct, norms of behavior and conventions. . . . That the informal constraints are important in themselves (and not simply as appendages to formal rules) can be observed from the evidence that the same formal rules and/or constitutions imposed on very different societies produce different outcomes.

Douglass C. North

*Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance*, 1990.

Assumptions underlying neoliberal policies separate the political from the economic and explain institutional change as rational actors' responses to market incentives. Relying on a "thin" view of rationality, methodological individualists such as rational choice and neoclassical theorists assume that collective political and social outcomes follow mainly from the aggregation of individual preferences (for an overview of the debate around rational choice approaches, see for example Green and Shapiro

1994). More recent revisionist versions of the neoliberal perspective have begun to pay attention to formal *and* informal institutions.

According to North, who has been at the forefront of the recent institutional turn within economics, the issue of institutional formation and change is explained by understanding how human beings devise instruments, institutions, and norms of behavior that reduce information asymmetries and transaction costs (North 1990).<sup>4</sup> This is undertaken either through a third party such as the coercive enforcement of the state or through informal institutions seen in ongoing social relationships and reflected in customs, conventions, and norms (North 1990, 2005; Bardhan 2000).

North distinguishes between personal and impersonal exchange, and suggests that transaction costs differ in both situations. In personal exchange there are low costs of enforcement since there are repeated exchanges among the parties. Since market exchange is not confined to a small number of actors and entails high enforcement costs, markets and communities are not necessarily substitutes, but rather can complement each other since each has different costs and benefits for organizing exchange. Due to the existence of asymmetric information and incomplete contracts, the strength of community-governed exchange is seen in a lowering of the cost of contract “enforcement.”<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Transaction costs are characterized as the cost of measuring the characteristics and attributes of whatever is being owned or exchanged, as well as the costs of enforcing exchange. In this perspective, technology and the specification of property rights determine the measurement costs. Technology provides the precision to measure what is being exchanged, while property rights determine a measure of ownership rights to the asset or resource. According to North, the more precisely both are specified the lower the cost of transacting (North 1990).

<sup>5</sup> The revisionist neoliberal perspective also posits that when the state is weak, or oppressive, or merely corrupt, social networks become important for producing and enforcing “credible commitments,” for designing, implementing, and enforcing all sorts of formal and informal contracts.

Responses to the neoliberal Washington Consensus have begun to view informal institutions, especially primary social relationships, as an important aspect for establishing markets and thus making development work. However, these approaches are ambivalent about the role of informal institutions in the long-term. Informal institutions such as customs, traditions, and norms matter, especially in the “early stages” of market development. Evoking the experience of the emergence of markets in the west these scholars argue that societies “need effective, impersonal contract enforcement [provided by the state] because personal ties, voluntaristic constraints, and ostracism are no longer effective” (see for example, North 1990; cited in Greif 2001, 4). As a modern state matures and develops representative forms of governance with a clear hierarchical structure and a system of laws, rules and regulations, it replaces “community” as the guardian of social business and personal contract. For neoinstitutional economists, the historical process of economic development depends on the nature of a society’s contract enforcement institutions, which requires substituting away from “community based” governance to “market based” governance. This process, “necessitates a transition from contract enforcement relying on personal, repeated relations within a community to one based on formal, state-mandated legal contract enforcement among market participants” (Greif 2001, 3). Thus, with market development the value of informal institutions declines (or should decline for an efficient market to function). This process is also evident in strategies that have sought the “formalization” and “standardization” of property rights.

Hernando De Soto (2000), for example, has been at the forefront of popularizing this perspective. Critiquing conventional macroeconomic reform programs for ignoring

the poor and assuming they have no wealth to build, he argues this major constituency of capitalism has been locked out of its benefits. According to De Soto, the problem is the lack of formal property rights for the poor. The majority of poor people are without formal, secure rights to their assets (for example, they hold their resources in defective forms: houses built on land whose ownership rights are not adequately recorded, unincorporated businesses with undefined liability, industries located where financiers and investors cannot see them). They are therefore mostly unable to put these assets to productive use as collateral to raise cash or transform assets into productive capital.

Capitalism succeeds because it is a “system of representation” which makes “visible” every parcel of land, every building, every piece of equipment, or store of inventories represented in a property document. De Soto argues that these representative elements of capitalism—property systems—will encourage the development of assets and protecting asset transactions, enabling people to gather and order dispersed information, easing communication, solving conflicts, and serving to hold people accountable.

De Soto, like other revisionist neoliberals, remains at best ambivalent about informal institutions. One of the major critiques of market (and liberal democratic) fundamentalism is its neglect of informal institutions. By ignoring *métis*, De Soto and others in this perspective thus overlook the role of local politics and culture (Scott 1998). For example, often, the right to land (including land administration) varies because it depends on local traditions, cultural factors and colonial history. Creating uniform systems of property rights will not serve as a functional means of dealing with the variety of norms and rules and the fragmented systems of rights that have evolved locally, as Dennis Galvan, for example, illustrates in the transformation of free hold tenure into a

hybrid system *taile* land pawning among the Serer in Senegal (Galvan 2004). Thus, while the Washington Consensus did not account for informal institutions, its critique “from within,” argues that informal institutions matter, but only in the short-term.

A similar trend about the importance of informal institutions as lowering the costs of compliance has emerged among political scientists who traditionally focused on formal institutions such as constitutions, party systems, courts, electoral rules, and bureaucracies. Often also described as associational spaces that exist between the authority of the state and the exchange relations of the market, informal norms and relationships in the form of social capital are viewed as indispensable for institutional performance. The concept of social capital has a long history, but in recent times it drew attention through the work of Pierre Bourdieu, was deployed in a modified form in the mid-1990s by Gary Becker and James Coleman, and was eventually popularized by Robert Putnam following the publication of *Making Democracy Work*. Social capital highlighted the informal or culturally embedded institutions that motivated collective action and had aggregative developmental effects. In its more popular formulation:

dense segregated horizontal networks sustain cooperation with each group, but networks of civic engagement that cut across social cleavages nourish wider cooperation. (Putnam 1993, 175)

Putnam’s demonstration that Italy’s democratic institutions rested on the foundations of civic community, a cultural variable, revived an older tradition on political culture, spoke to the Tocquevillean tradition about democratic governance and simultaneously seemed to provide a viable response to the hegemony and lacunae of neoclassical and rational choice theorizing.

In the last two decades there has been a cottage industry of social capitalists in a range of disciplines, including its adoption at the World Bank, partly in response to the

extreme economism of structural adjustment policies (see for example, Lin and Cook et al. 2001; Narayan and Pritchett 2000; World Bank 1999). To some extent social capital gained prominence not on its merits, but on the defects of the alternatives. Those who are skeptical about markets harnessing selfish motives for collective benefits found social capital useful since it highlighted trust, social generosity and community. For proponents of *laissez faire*, social capital had the potential for providing public goods and social insurance instead of states (see for example, Bowles and Gintis 2002; Fine 2001; Harriss 2001). Rather than tracing the trajectory of this concept, what is important for our purposes is to point out some of the contradictions within social capital's core formulation. The problem with the dominant conceptualization of social capital, as with previous political culture approaches, is that it relies on a dichotomous understanding of culture (see for example, Almond and Verba 1963.). Social capitalists assume that modern economies and liberal democracy work only when they are supported by civic "universalistic" norms associated with the western modernity. If mobilization is based on ethnicity, primordial group sentiments, face-to-face particularistic relations or "uncivic" norms, the emergence of crosscutting ties that promote mutual tolerance and establishment of democratic institutions is ruled out.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> From a Lakatosian perspective there are several problems in the core formulation in the conceptualization and theorizing about social capital. First, it is problematic to measure social capital to identify whether there is "more or less" social capital. Instead the focus should be on locating how economic, social, and institutional factors are intermingled. Second, social capitalists have not given adequate attention to the role of power and recognizing that these associational spaces can be sites of inclusion as well as exclusion. Finally, those who examine social capital do not point out that these are "intermediate" institutions, which need to be located within the broader political, economic, and institutional relations. Typically, social capital is presented as a "magic bullet" that can solve all development problems in a society.

### **The Interface of Economy and Society: Embeddedness**

Commonly associated with Karl Polanyi's *The Great Transformation*, embeddedness expresses the idea that the economy is not as autonomous as is assumed in economic theories, but is actually subordinated to politics and social relations. The contemporary relevance of embeddedness has been its critique of under-socialized or atomized-actor accounts of neoliberal and neoclassical choice theoretic approaches to demonstrate the social character of economic life.<sup>7</sup> In network-oriented studies, the argument is that close ties (for example, multiple social relationships which could include family, religious affiliation, community membership) among actors (individuals, groups, or organizations) provide the "trust" for transactions to take place. In this perspective, individuals are embedded in cultural and organizational fields and self-interest and utility are constructed in this embedded state (Granovetter 1985). Decision-making is not driven by opportunity costs and/or relative prices; it is shaped by social interrelationships, networks of trust, and notions of legitimacy. Richard Scott argues:

Cultural fields, which define concepts such as justice, efficiency, equality, and democracy, influence individual and organizational choices. These cultural fields offer a variety of symbolic and cultural systems from which individuals choose.

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<sup>7</sup> Economic sociologists such as Mark Granovetter resurrected and popularized this interpretation to argue that social relations stabilize exchange relationships (Granovetter 1985; Granovetter and Swedberg 1992). Mark Granovetter deployed the term embeddedness in a 1985 paper that has since become one of the classics of economic sociology and social network analysis. However, even though Granovetter used the term embeddedness to illustrate that economic activities are intertwined with social relations, he had not read Polanyi at that time and was not familiar with *The Great Transformation*. "I would guess that I had picked up the term embeddedness from Harrison White's lectures when I was a graduate student, but I can't be absolutely sure about that...so the fact that it is used differently is not because I was really doing this in dialogue with Polanyi. I was just using it in a different way." It was only later when he received comments on drafts from colleagues and other scholars who pointed that he might have revived the idea of Polanyi's notion embeddedness, that Granovetter read Polanyi's, "The Economy as an Instituted Process." (Granovetter 2003, 113-114).



The choices made are then reflected in the structures, functions, and goals of individuals as well as in institutions within which individuals are embedded. (Scott 1995, 41)

Recent scholarship on “varieties of capitalism” also illustrates that trust, reciprocity, and long-term strategies which are essential for markets and capitalism to exist, are produced and sustained by a range of informal institutions including: families, community-like structures, clans, associations, and/or networks. In post-fordist economies, systems of flexible specialization can operate in large part due to localized “informal” network like interactions among economic actors (Hollingsworth and Boyer 1997).

Hollingsworth and Boyer (1997, 445) thus argue:

Products that embody a high degree of technical complexity, rapid and unpredictable innovation, and unexpected variations in demand cannot be produced in a world coordinated by pure market relations. This is because formalized contracts alone between managers and workers, large firms and their subcontractors, cannot provide the quality, speed of delivery, adaptability to demand in shifts and new technologies. Rather they can be produced only in a world that has institutions that provide trust, risk sharing, tacit knowledge, and strategic information.

Informal institutions in the form of networks are different because they depend on non-market rationality and trust. Closely related to competition organized through “impersonal” market processes, and coordination involving hierarchical control (as classically in a bureaucracy), this scholarship identifies the roles of networks. The exemplar of this genre of work, Ouchi (1980), differentiates between markets, bureaucracies and clans. Networks are based on shared goals. These informal structures, according to Ouchi, are likely to be efficient, especially in circumstances in which there is ambiguity or difficulty of measurement of individual performance (when the market mechanism does not work very well).

Thus, we see that for these culturally sympathetic scholars, one of the primary goals has been to critique the narrow assumptions of economics, especially neoclassical economics. These scholars present a revised perspective about the importance of institutions, especially the nature of contracts in market exchange. The argument is that without viable contracts the market will not perform. However, for contracts to be viable there is a need for “honesty” and “trust.” It is in this context that economic sociologists and anthropologists have highlighted the non-structural elements in contracts—or embedding in informal institutions. The claim that the economy (and the state) is socially constituted moves us in the right direction, away from the narrow undersocialized conception of neoclassical economics, but it falls short of fully articulating the insights in Polanyi’s embeddedness thesis.

The analytical and normative implications of *The Great Transformation* also lend themselves to an anti-market or market-pessimistic perspective. Those who discredit markets, follow from Polanyi to point out markets’ regressive “dis-embedding” qualities, which entail the removal of social objects from the sphere of the “social” into the sphere of the “market,” suggesting that, if not contained, markets will erode all kinds of customary, communal, traditional institutional arrangements. In its extreme version, this perspective retains an artificial separation between the “economy” and “society.”

James Carrier and Daniel Miller (1998) provocatively argue that the process described as “dis-embedding” is an abstraction which occurs at a practical level in the realm of production and circulation of objects and services, as well as at a conceptual level, which is the way people think about and understand their economic lives. This becomes “virtualism” when people view economic theories to be not only a parsimonious

description of what is really happening, but are prescriptive in that they attempt to make the world conform to the virtual vision that has been created by the discourse and narrative of neoliberal economics and later transported and made hegemonic by international development agencies and practitioners such as those at the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

In applying embeddedness one must be careful then not to reify the notion of “self-regulating” markets even though it is this deception that provides the rationale by which capitalism continually works by “freeing” economic relations from state control, and cultural norms and practices (see for example, Carruthers and Babb 2000; Dilley 1992).

The use of embeddedness in network-oriented scholarship, as well as anti-market studies, does not give adequate attention, however, to the full range of Polanyi’s conception. Integral to the conception of embeddedness is also the idea that successful challenges to and redefinitions of land, labor, and money can evolve into counter movements. According to Polanyi, all societies include a mix of three ideal types of institutions: for reciprocity, redistribution, and market exchange. For any particular institution, a mix of elements from the ideal types is brought together and shaped by a complex blend of politics, culture, and ideology. Under this view then, markets as social institutions cannot have the self-regulating properties of an ideal-type exchange institution. Rather, they reflect *particular* meanings that particular societies associate with land, labor, and money, which Polanyi treats conceptually as “fictitious commodities” (Polanyi 1957, 71-74).

From this it follows that the tensions that Polanyi identifies, between society and its cultural norms and capitalism’s attempts at freeing itself from social and state control,

and the “counter movements” it can engender, are always historically mediated and culturally constituted. In the contemporary context, attempts at decoupling markets from state regulation and societal norms by actors inspired by the Washington Consensus have been countered by the emergence of social capital “from within” (anti-globalization protests and emerging transnational social movements such as those seen at the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre, Brazil) and movements “from without,” such as fundamentalist Islamic organizations as well as the micropolitics of local people’s livelihood struggles.

The idea of embeddedness as evoked by Polanyi leads us in the right direction, and can be complemented with concerns that are central for scholars who focus on “late developing” non-western societies. The paradox faced by states among late developers has been how to balance state-society relations which allow the state to remain “autonomous” yet “embedded” in its society, and thus to be able to effectively steer development (Evans 1996; Midgal 2001). These concerns, with power and the “tradition-modern” dichotomy, raise critical questions regarding the relationship between the “formal” and “informal” realms (and the characterization of embeddedness): Do informal institutions impede the process of political and economic “development”/modernization (for example, the creation of democratic regimes and markets)? Or, do they mutually transform each other, giving rise to newer patterns of informal rules and relationships?

### **Informality and Embedded Markets in Rural Africa**

A key insight of embeddedness is that markets are *always* socially constituted, but they can be more or less personalistic. In a similar vein, many Africanist scholars have argued that while markets are pervasive and may become the main institutional basis for

livelihoods, they are neither classically capitalist, nor working optimally to bring about economic growth or development. Governmental sectors often offer few resources and impose even less coordination and discipline (owing to the downsizing of the state), thus leading to a high degree of "local inventiveness" (Guyer 1996).

In African societies, investing in personal relations has often been more important than adhering to imposed colonial and post-colonial institutions ontologically grounded in "modern" values and institutional practices. Scholars such as Goran Hyden and Sara Berry are two exemplars in this regard who emphasize the notion of investment in social relations/wealth in people as a key aspect that manages African social, political, and economic life (Berry 1985 and 1993; Hyden 1980 and 1983).

A key aspect for understanding the nature of markets and states in Africa thus has been an emphasis on the notion of informality and informal institutions predicated on the interplay of "wealth-in-people." According to Guyer, this conceptualization was first promoted by Miers and Kopytoff to denote a specifically African mode of accumulation, whether in the Marxian terms as accumulation of social relations or in substantive institutional terms as kinship, religious clientelism or political prebendalism (see for example, Guyer 1995; Joseph 1987; Kopytoff 1987).

Deploying the interpretive power of "wealth in people" or "accumulation of social relations" brings "agency" to the notion of embeddedness, especially as it is applicable to the African context. More often than not, scholars who have utilized the concept of informal institutions, implicitly or explicitly allude to a Geertzian interpretation of culture as norms and values, which are collectively shared. When culture is considered as shared values, institutionalization (or formalization) is the process of stabilizing or

privileging some sub-set of these values. For example, in constructing formal institutions (laws, formal organizational structures), the purpose is to highlight and codify certain values over others. Informal institutions, on the other hand, are not codified explicitly, or officially promulgated and standardized. On this basis, one could argue that both formal and informal institutions include rules and values; however, in formal institutions values and rules are codified while in informal institutions people may have certain values and follow certain rules, but these are implicit, commonly understood and implied.

If, however, we consider that informal institutions are outside the domain of formal institutions, then instead of third-party enforcement one finds that “expectations that people develop by interacting with each other” provides an explanation of how they work. Informal institutions draw from both shared values or regularized patterns and also reflect shared expectations which actors develop over a period of time owing to either or both shared values and interests. Thus, informal institutions can emerge in situations such as the mafia or other extra-legal groups because what produce a regularized pattern of interaction are common interests which are then complemented by a shared expectation that people develop about mutual support as they interact with each other (and in the case of the mafia, the fear of being killed if they break certain norms).

The approach to informal institutions in this study is best defined as *between exchange and reciprocity*. The logic of investing in social relationships and people has both affective and instrumental aspects. It includes shared beliefs about rights and obligations, and that social relations are rooted in a moral expectation and norms of reciprocity that familial and face-to-face ties (of extended families, kinship, neighbors, and friends) will provide support for one another in times of need. On the other hand,

there is a strategic dimension of investing in social relations over an extended period of time where there is an expectation that at some time in the future it will pay off.

Embedding then has differential effects. In some organizational contexts informal institutions help create coherence and encourages greater effectiveness. In other instances, however, the outcome may be the contrary: it undercuts the formal rules and reduces effective performance. It is these kinds of processes that this study tries to capture and analyze more closely in Botswana and Zambia.

However, as is the central focus of this study, what happens to informal institutions that depend on investing in social relations in the context of state and market incorporation? Following a Chayanovian interpretation of household economics, the arguments developed in the early 1980s deployed the logic of a peasant mode of production where rural producers employed rudimentary technologies, organized production around extended households, and accumulated meager economic surpluses. Since the peasant mode of production permitted a limited form of accumulation it was argued that this provided insufficient surplus extraction by the dominant class/elites to further their own interests on a sustained basis (Chayanov 1991). It was in this sense, unlike Europe and other developing regions such as South Asia and Latin America, where the rural peasants were in dependent formations; the African peasantry according to Hyden was until recently “uncaptured” or autonomous. The combination of an uncaptured peasantry and state weakness perpetuated an “economy of affection” in which traditional social relations are rooted in the moral expectation that members of extended families will support one another in times of need (Hyden 1980 and 1993). The informal institutions of the economy of affection persisted because the material foundation of

African societies was grounded in a “pre-capitalist” mode of production that was aimed at maintaining reproduction and not necessarily production for the market.

African localities have, however, engaged the market by commodifying social and economic relations and are a “target” of state policies. Does this imply that local beliefs and traditions remain static—or the informal institutions within the economy of affection remain unchanging? The economy of affection can be portrayed as contrary to “modern” institutions of the state and market. In this regard, the conceptualization of the economy of affection is similar to the perspective of the revisionist neoliberal scholars who account for the “short-term” importance of informal institutions and “pre-capitalist” norms and values. The economy of affection tells us that in African societies investing in personal relations is more often primary than adhering to the imposed set of colonial and post-colonial institutions that are ontologically grounded in “modern,” western originating values and institutional practices. But what happens when the foundational institutions or what Hyden calls the “backbone” of the economy of affection—family and kinship structures—undergo a transformation in the context of accelerated social change which these days is associated with globalization? What explains the persistence of these informal institutions in “modernizing” “proto-capitalist” societies?

Here the insights of Marxian literature on African rural transformations, especially by the French structuralists Meillassoux (1981) and Coquery-Vidrovitch (1972) are instructive. These scholars expand Marxian analyses by arguing that the logic of a pre-capitalist mode of production based on subsistence reproduction perseveres and obstructs its articulation with a capitalist mode of production. Since the material foundations of a pre-capitalist mode of production are grounded in maintaining reproduction and not



necessarily production, there are a variety of ways in which African social formations articulate with received western capitalist modes of production. Distinct pre-capitalist structures may persist, thus presenting a fundamental disarticulation in the process of capitalist penetration and wholesale transformation of pre-capitalist structures. To some extent Meillassoux and Coquery-Vidrovitch might be criticized for reifying and attributing intentionality to capitalism and ignoring the autonomous role of African societies in reproducing themselves. However, they reject the idea that there is one, ideal, unitary path for the "evolution" of institutions in rural Africa. According to Bayart, the historicity of African societies has been bound up with that of the western world. Dominant interpretations of African societies do not reflect the true historicity of Africa. The continuity of African formations has thus been hidden while the episodes of European penetration have taken on clear outlines (Bayart 1993). Similarly, Guyer (1996) asserts that without a concerted approach to the social organization of knowledge in Africa, we tacitly allow a continued highly selective mobilization of individual studies of African societies to illustrate general points in western theory.

Theorizing in this vein allows us to move away from a singular discourse of development and modernity that emanated from the neoliberal orthodoxy as well as the softer alternative of this approach which recognizes the need for social safety support and a minimalist state that guarantees property rights and provides the modicum of rule of law (see for example, De Soto 2000; Stiglitz 2003). Peter Evans, for example, argues that the standard strategy of institutional mono-cropping, which imposes idealized versions of Anglo-American institutions regardless of their level of development or position in the global economy, cannot work. In practice, the disjuncture between formal

structures and the underlying more informal structures of power and practice renders the formal structures ineffectual (Evans 2002). Similarly, James Scott has pointed out that attempts at “state simplification” and “legibility” assumes away local differences and practices, but simplified rules can never generate a functioning community, city, or economy (Scott 1998). “Formal order, to be more explicit, is always and to some considerable degree parasitic on informal processes, which the formal scheme does not recognize, without which it could not exist, and which it alone cannot create or maintain” (Scott 1998, 310).

While Evans highlights the dysfunctional character of institutional mono-cropping and Scott points to failed attempts at “simplification,” Alan Pred and Michael Watts’ (1992) invocation of “multiple modernities” takes the argument further. Vectors of capitalist modernity are not seen only in terms of a single logic or objective (capital accumulation), but are shaped by multiple forms of social relations and practices (see for example, Gaonkar 2001; Sivaramakrishnan and Agrawal 2002). For Pred and Watts, the “global” impositions of modernity and capitalism always articulate with “local” practices and history, and are refashioned and refigured. Millenarian Muslim movements among the Ogoni in the Niger Delta, changing work relations of peasant households in response to the introduction of rice production in West Africa, Soukous music that originated in Zaire and the Congo, and the emergence of curry as an “authentic” British cuisine are all instances of local reworkings.

Embedding in informal institutions can also be seen as a form of cultural reinvention. It allows people to relate to formal institutions that are first perceived as “foreign” or illegitimate. By making the organization “theirs,” people engaging in

reciprocal and personalistic exchanges not only build solidarity but also make it operate more effectively. Dennis Galvan's notion of "institutional syncretism" frames processes of institutional impositions and local articulations to explain development successes and failures (Galvan 2004).<sup>8</sup>

The informal realm, therefore, functions as a mechanism for "culture re-reading" which is often an important factor in spurring better performance. In local development contexts, these types of informal institutional interactions that provide "cultural legitimation" are also important for the purpose of stimulating popular participation and greater public accountability. This study will examine the extent to which informal institutions are utilized by various actors and affect efforts at rural development and conservation.

### Conclusion

This chapter has suggested that a greater focus on the way formal institutions like the state and the market are socially embedded—and to that extent driven by "society" expressed in terms of informal human agency—allows researchers to step outside the relatively narrow ideal-type policy thinking. Informal institutions are not merely hindrances to development, but the very cultural stuff on which development often relies. Externalizing such factors that do not fit neat formal models, therefore, leaves policy approaches unable to affect positive change in societies where they are implemented.

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<sup>8</sup> Syncretism is a critical, though contested, concept used by anthropologists, scholars of religion, and political scientists to study the interactions among "modern" institutional forms and "traditional" social practices in post-colonial societies. Rejecting the duality of modernization theory between modernity and tradition, these scholars highlight the interactions between "traditional" institutions that support or subvert formal modern institutions (a rational-legal, highly specialized, individualistic ethos) (see for example, Rudolph and Rudolph 1967; Galvan 2004; Sil 2002). According to Galvan, "syncretism can produce innovative, adapted institutions which meet the demands of rapid change while *seeming* 'culturally authentic' and worthy of personal sacrifice to ordinary actors" (Galvan 2004, 1).

Informal institutions are often seen as transitory, by necessity giving way to more formal and "modern" institutions. As this chapter suggests, recent scholarship, especially on Africa, calls such an interpretation into question.

The important aspect to acknowledge here is that development in Africa – and elsewhere – is not just a passive response to the imposition of market and state institutions. The fascinating aspect about local development in Africa is, as Sara Berry and Michael Watts have effectively demonstrated the versatility of local actors and thus their ability to reinvent or restructure formal institutional solutions to suit their own circumstances. Because this appropriation is often viewed as distractive by policy-makers and analysts alike, it is typically criticized. Yet what this research will demonstrate in the development context of Botswana and Zambia is that such processes of reinventions and appropriations are part and parcel of what is going on all the time and they are not always negative, but *are* always historically and culturally constituted.

The subsequent chapters focus on how and under what circumstances informal institutions shape conservation and development outcomes. In chapter 2, I provide an overview of the historical context of Zambia and Botswana and introduce the research sites. In chapter 3, I discuss why the high expectations associated with community based development strategies in Botswana have met with mixed results and why it has been difficult to create representative and accountable local level self-governing organizations, a critical building block of community-based approaches. In examining the contentious debate surrounding the renewal of the safari operator's contract with rural communities, one finds that bureaucracies, private firms and community based organizations do not embody the ideal-typical logic commonly ascribed to these categories. Actors within the

market do not function only according to the invisible hand, actors within the states do not apply only impersonal rules, and community actors are not driven only by norms of reciprocity. The politics of establishing community based resource conservation regimes in the Okavango Delta can be more adequately understood by looking at the nexus of informal relations that substitute and in some instances subvert the formal realm.

In Chapter 4, I illustrate how, in the pre-colonial and early colonial period, festive work parties and *kalimalima* were the modal forms of labor relations. The latter were characterized by horizontal norms of community reciprocity and social support. But over time informal norms of community solidarity, fairness, and social support have become fragmented first via colonialism and later during the post colonial period in attempts at agricultural intensification. Most recently the norms have fragmented following structural adjustment-led state withdrawal. The “disembedding” of labor is evident in the commodification and individualization of labor arrangements. A further “disembedding” of labor practices can be evinced in the 1990s, when *ganyu* practices became unglued from local norms of reciprocity and fairness. However, local responses also illustrate the processes of “re-embedding” which can be seen in the emergence of *group ganyu* and *kalimalima-in-clubs*. These syncretic practices blend the network like qualities of early colonial *kalimalima*, festive labor linked with beer brewing, and the exchange rationalism of *ganyu*.

One of the *puzzles* of politics of CBNRM in Botswana and improved fallows projects in Zambia is the role of the state. The continuities in Botswana’s statist

developmental project contrast with the discontinuities of Zambia.<sup>9</sup> The findings presented in this study suggest that the state has been unable or unwilling to effectively manage the CBNRM process due to its “benign paternalism.” With its blend of developmentalism evident in a reasonably well managed national economy that relies on diamond wealth and authoritarian tendencies, Botswana’s high-modernist state tends to encapsulate and capture local practices under official ideologies of development, thus stifling local empowerment (at least in the short-term). State building in Zambia initially exemplified its official ideology of “humanism” and in recent years has regressed into a factionalized unstable multi-party system. Following the implementation of structural adjustment policies, informal relations are increasingly important to solve collective problems and community approaches provide an opportunity for local improvisation. But in the absence of an effective state they tend to become captured and manipulated by local elites.

The findings presented in this study engage recent scholarship that from a variety of epistemological and methodological perspectives has re-converged on informal institutions. The illustrations from Botswana and Zambia in the following chapters deepen our theoretical understanding of the social embeddedness of the state (and also the market). At the same time, the articulations evident in this work between formal and informal institutions help us specify the precise ways in which culture and tradition bound choice and preference formation.

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<sup>9</sup> Kohli (2004) has recently drawn attention to longer patterns of historical change, which shape development trajectories of late developing states. In showing how history matters, this study provides the perspective from “below,” of how local actors respond to attempts at state and market incorporation.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE SETTING: INCOMPLETE AND PARTIAL INTEGRATION

The stories of reconstitution of local institutions in response to exogenously induced change discussed in the dissertation are based on communities that reside in the panhandle of Okavango Delta in northern Botswana and the plateau region of Zambia's Eastern Province. These communities have been marginal to the development ambitions of their respective states. My aim is not to generalize or claim that the experiences of these communities are representative of all rural localities in Africa. There is no denying, however, that they are caught in the contemporary changes in institutional life and in their logics of justification associated with the broad 19th and 20th century processes of incomplete and partial integration into a market economy and "modern" society. Together, the stories highlight the multiple trajectories of reconstitution of local institutions in response to exogenously induced change.

The first part of the chapter provides an overview of Botswana and Zambia's development experience, especially the nature of state building, and locates the Okavango Delta and the Eastern Province in the broader political economy of their respective countries. The second section of the chapter introduces the research setting by locating the experiences of the *Bayei*, *Humbukushu*, *Basarwa*, and the *Ngonis* in the broader context of southern African history. To discuss the local political economy it is important to situate it within a general discussion of "wealth-in-people" and its articulation within the "lineage mode of production." This provides a backdrop for understanding the importance of informal institutions especially in the African context.

### **Why Botswana and Zambia?**

Zambia was one of Africa's richest countries in the 1970s due to copper exports and a vibrant agricultural sector. From that peak in prosperity, within three decades most Zambians have slid deeper into poverty. In 1991, sixty nine percent of the population was below the poverty line, based on an estimate of the amount of monthly income needed to purchase basic food for a family of six. This rose to 73 percent by 1997. By 2003, Zambia had one of the highest levels of income poverty in southern Africa (following Angola, Mozambique and Malawi) with over 80 percent of its population in early 2003 living on less than a dollar a day. The 2003 United Nations Human Development Index (HDI), ranked Zambia 164 out of 175 countries.

Saddled by an unsustainable international debt, relying on copper whose global commodity price has plummeted, and constrained by "conditionalities" imposed by piecemeal structural adjustment reforms, Zambia is typical of African countries where development policy reforms have not succeeded in improving the lot of the majority of its population.<sup>10</sup>

Botswana, on the other hand, is ranked 128 on the HDI (below India which ranks 127). The per capita income of \$8,170 in Botswana far surpasses Zambia's \$ 870 (and India's \$ 2670). Unlike Zambia, Botswana is characterized as an exceptionally successful African country. Botswana's economy relies predominantly on wealth from production and export of diamonds and its livestock industry. Compared to other African

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<sup>10</sup> The World Bank's Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRSP) highlights this point: "Once a middle income country, Zambia has lived through three decades of declining living standards arising from poor management of the government-owned copper mines, falling export revenues (over two-thirds of which is from copper exports), failure to diversify the economy away from mining, weak macro-economic management, rising foreign debt, and recurrent fiscal crises." The PRSPs are a prerequisite for countries requiring debt relief from multilateral international development agencies such as the World Bank and IMF under the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) (World Bank 2002).



countries such as Sierra Leone and Congo where natural resources have been the root cause of countless civil wars, Botswana's diamonds have not elicited similar rent seeking by its elites. Within four decades of independence, the state has established new villages and towns, and provided basic infrastructure of water, sanitation, and education to most of its citizens. With good fiscal management policies, Botswana remains a relatively unique success story among African countries (Harvey and Lewis 1990; Samatar 1999).

The contrasting development experiences of the two countries, especially in the last two decades, make for an interesting comparison. However, the illustrations of local institutional responses to externally imposed changes can be better understood by delving into the divergent trajectories of state building and consolidation.

The continuities in the statist development project in Botswana contrast with the discontinuities in Zambia. State building in Zambia under the one-party state initially exemplified its official ideology of "humanism" but was driven by patronage, and in recent years has regressed into a factionalized unstable multi-party system. The Zambian state has been unable to effectively implement its development vision. It is an illustration of the "weak" state that many authors have identified as typical of much of sub-Saharan Africa (Bratton 1980; Bates 1983).

Patrimonial politics initially contributed to political stability, but following the economic decline in the 1980s and 1990s, the same kind of politics exacerbated the weakness of the Zambian state which was unable to effectively implement its vision. Neither structural adjustment nor the introduction of multi-party politics changed that situation for the better. In fact, it further weakened the state. During the first few decades following independence, Eastern Province became a UNIP (United National

Independence Party) stronghold and was connected to patronage networks because the first president of the country, Dr Kenneth Kaunda, had strong ties that went back to the colonial struggle. This period saw investment in local infrastructure including agricultural inputs as well as training. During the 1970s, the nationalization of the copper mines and many of the commercial farms was illustrative of the reliance on the state as the principal mechanism for development.

The collapse of the copper prices coupled with the austerity programs designed to root out inefficiencies in the public sector and statist institutions saw the breakdown of the labor reserve economy and the fertilizer-intensive cash cropping agriculture schemes. Through the 1980s, after the collapse in the copper prices, the state did not have enough revenue to pay for its recurrent costs. The endemic corruption and mismanagement in public sector agencies provided the impetus for reforms which often meant the privatization of inefficient public sector agencies.

Neoliberal structural adjustment policies mandated by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank in the 1980s radically transformed the rules and responsibilities of agricultural production and marketing between states, markets, and communities. Structural adjustment policies were premised on a modernist discourse of linear progress toward an efficient market system based on individual pursuit of profit. Following its implementation in Zambia, the input distribution system was privatized, and thus state run cooperatives and marketing boards were closed. Under President Chiluba, who was elected the country's second president in 1991, Zambia went through some of the most sweeping economic liberalization programs in Southern Africa. The attempt at liberalizing the economy had the short-term intended effects of reducing

budget deficits and setting in motion the privatization of key state controlled and often inefficient industries. "Shock-therapy" of structural adjustment provided a shock, but probably little therapy. Studies since the early 1990s show that fertilizer- and credit-subsidy removal and exchange rate liberalization led to massive increases in the costs of production inputs, making it beyond the reach of most farmers (Borlaug 2003, Gladwin 1991, Sanchez 2002).

While the "developmental state" in Botswana with minimal patrimonial tendencies had been able to regulate and manage the process of consolidating its presence and guide "market integration" more effectively, the state in Zambia receded under the impact of structural adjustment.

Taken together the two countries under study here have come to follow two quite different development trajectories since independence. One has emerged as a strong state, the other declined into a weak one. One has adopted a modernist top-down approach to national development while the other has been forced to rely on institutions outside the state to promote its development. This is a significant difference and makes a comparison between these two cases especially compelling. Does one or the other provide more space for a more community-based approach to development? Does one or the other offer better prospects for newer effective forms of governance to emerge at the local level? These questions constitute important themes throughout this study.

#### **Research Setting: Okavango Delta and Eastern Province**

This study is based on over eighteen months of field research undertaken in the panhandle of the Okavango Delta and the plateau region of Zambia's Eastern province. The two locations are comparable in the sense that they are both peripheral to the capital and centre of the country and have been recipients of externally supported development

projects. The Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) project in Ngamiland has its "developmental" equivalence in the Zambia Integrated Agroforestry (ZIAP) improved fallows project in Eastern Province. In Botswana, the state actors initiated and approved of the broad-based CBNRM because of confidence in its own ability to serve its citizens. In Zambia the story is, of course, somewhat different because the state had limited capacity to take on participatory rural development activities. Instead, international non-governmental organizations (NGO) like World Vision filled the gap. Even though the ZIAP did not have the same degree of organizational complexity as the CBNRM project in Botswana, it was a significant intervention in the local economy of the Eastern Province that was aimed at improving the livelihoods of poor farm households.

The argument presented in the dissertation is based on field research conducted in Botswana and the Eastern Province of Zambia from May-August 1998 and 1989, and January 2000 to January 2001. I used a four step data-gathering strategy comprised of archival research, in-depth interviews, focus groups, and individual informant surveys to address the research questions.

### **Research Setting: Okavango Delta**

The Okavango Delta is one of the world's most unique wetlands as it ends in the Kalahari Desert. The Delta is fed by rainfall in the highlands of Angola which flows through the Okavango river. When the annual floods arrive (approximately six months after the rains in Angola), the water travels through over 16,000 square miles, replenishing the lower portions of the Okavango Delta and eventually drying up in the flatness of the northern Kalahari. Every day the Delta deposits over 27000 million liters of water into the dry sands of the Kalahari. The upper portion of the Delta has a network

of perennial channels and reed beds. The large mammals move to the sandveld during the rainy season for grazing, and return to the Delta during the long dry season when the water-beds dry up. Shifting flooding patterns with wet and dry phases determine its mosaic-like vegetation structure—a mixture of woodlands, grasslands, and perennial swamps—as well as the movement of the diverse water dependent wildlife across vast regions of the Delta. The fragile and unique hydrological regime, coupled with low levels of human settlement, has created one of the most diverse and ecologically sensitive habitats in the world.

In Botswana, poverty is especially severe in the Ngamiland, Ghanzi, and Kgalagadi districts which are also where most wildlife is located.<sup>11</sup> Ngamiland in the Okavango Delta is among the poorest districts in Botswana. Its population density is lower than the national average and half the population lives in villages with fewer than 500 people in the drier areas around the fringes of the Okavango Delta.<sup>12</sup> Accessibility to most settlements in the district is impeded due to a lack of tarred roads and is especially difficult during the rainy season.

The research was conducted in the northern sandveld of the Okavango Delta which is 500 kilometers or almost a full-day's drive from Maun, the capital of Ngamiland district. A handful of villages, scores of cattle-posts and small settlements nestled

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<sup>11</sup> Botswana's economy relies predominantly on wealth from diamonds and its livestock industry. But national parks and game reserves occupy 17 percent of the total land area of Botswana and a further 22 percent has been designated as wildlife management areas. With 39 percent of the land dedicated to conservation and wildlife management, in recent years, tourism has been highlighted as another key sector for diversification.

<sup>12</sup> According to the Central Statistical Organization, the total area of Ngamiland is 86,400 km<sup>2</sup> and in 2001 as the Northwest district, it was 129,930. However, in the Ngamiland District Development Plan the area is calculated as 101,130 square kilometers. Total Population in 1971=47,723; 1981=68,063; 1991=94,534; (considered as Northwest District, which includes Chobe and Ngamiland) 2001=142,970. The 2001 census was calculated according to nine districts (Ngamiland District Plan 2000-05).

between the Caprivi in the north and the rest of the Okavango Delta in the south are strung almost in a straight line for a distance of 180 kilometers. The area is upstream, and water from the Okavango River first enters Botswana through the panhandle. Resource use and livelihoods in the panhandle influence the shape of the hydrological pulse, which in turn has effects throughout the Delta.

The illustrations presented about institutional transformation in the dissertation are based on two community conservation projects involving five villages—Seronga, Gunitoga, Eretsha, Beetsha, and Gudigwa which are adjacent to each other. The river spills over the Okavango Delta near the village of Seronga, ninety-five kilometers from Mohembo, spreading across a vast complex of twisting waterways, islands, floodplains and lagoons—nearly 15,000 square kilometers in extent. The settlements are ethnically diverse and geographically isolated from urbanized southern Botswana

Table 1-1 Settlement population in the Okavango Delta's panhandle

Villages	Population (1991)	Population (2001)	(% Annual Growth Rate)
Seronga (and associated settlements)	2611	3043	1.5%
Seronga	631	1641	9.2%
Gunitsoga	241	556	8.7%
Eretsha	386	630	5.0%
Beetsha (and associated settlements)	1462	2832	6.8%
Beetsha	236	760	12.4%
Gudigwa	234	732	12.1%

As Table 1-1 shows, Seronga is the largest village with a population of 3043 and includes predominantly *Wayeyi* and *Humbukushu* peoples. Gunitsoga with a population of 630 also has predominantly *Wayeyi*, while Eretsha and Beetsha both with a population

of 556 and 630, respectively, are predominantly *Humbukushu*. Gudigwa is one of the poorest villages in the northern sandveld with a population of 732 (Botswana Census, 2000). The residents of Gudigwa consider themselves the Bukakwe (one of the *Basarwa*/San sub-groups in southern Africa) making them what is perhaps the largest *Basarwa* village in Botswana.<sup>13</sup>

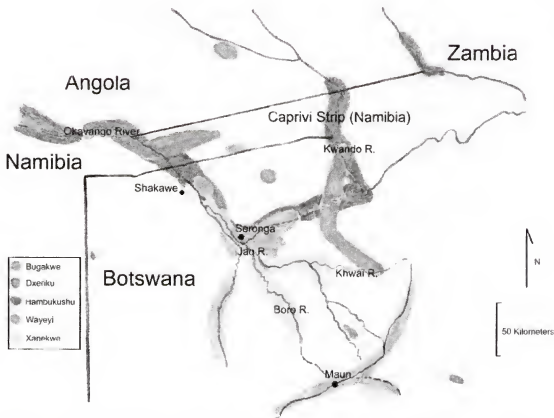


Figure 1-1 Map of the five minority ethnic groups that reside in the Okavango Delta

In oral history interviews, people indicated that until the middle of the last century the altering hydrology regime of the Delta, bouts of tse tse infestation, malaria, droughts, and wildlife led people to live in transient and small settlements which were scattered

<sup>13</sup> Map source: John Bock, <http://anthro.fullerton.edu/jbock/Okavango/index.html> (last accessed, April 15, 2005).

over much of the northern sandveld. Human settlements historically moved according to the availability of water and the occurrence of diseases like malaria and trypanosomosis.

### **Wealth-in-people and Wealth-in-things: The local political economy in Ngamiland**

Cattle were the epitome of social and symbolic capital; the capital that linked a material economy of things to a moral economy of persons, and so constructed a total economy of signs and practices. (Comaroff and Comaroff 1990, 206)

*"Modimo o o nko e metsi"* is a common refrain among *Batswana* men. It means literally "a God with a wet nose." In Botswana, like other agro-pastoral societies, cattle have historically been given a social and moral significance far beyond their economic value. The number of cattle a man owns determines his status in society. Acquiring cattle takes time and is a lifelong ambition. This means that the older men always tend to have more than the younger ones. Status and influence in society, therefore, rests not only with men, but more particularly with the senior.<sup>14</sup>

In the past, cattle were vital for praying to ancestors, the transfer of bride price and in other rituals. These days, cattle are still used as payment by a man's family to the family of his prospective wife and provided, for example, during the loss of a member of the family at funerals. Cattle also act as security against misfortune. In times of need they can be sold or exchanged for other goods:

Cattle were the essence of dependability. Because they were largely self-producing and mobile in the face of drought and danger, they permitted a stable storage, exchange, and seemingly spontaneous growth in wealth. (Comaroff and Comaroff 1990, 201)

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<sup>14</sup> Among traditional farming households, 47 percent have no cattle, and 20 percent have fewer than 11. While 71 percent of such farming households own only 8 percent of the total national herd, the wealthiest one percent own roughly 25 percent of the herd, and the wealthiest 2.5 percent of farming households own 40 percent. Cattle ownership is especially gender biased. About 60 percent of all female farmers have no cattle, compared to 33 percent for male farmers. The average number of cattle owned by female farmers is six, compared to 20 for male farmers (See UNDP 2000 [Botswana Human Development Report]).



Tswana rulers, not unlike the *Ngonis*, established political clientage by integrating newer followers through the exchange of cattle. Until the mid-1800s communities living in the Delta lacked a unitary state and existed as diverse settlements since none of these entities were powerful enough to impose their rule on others (Tlou and Campbell 1984). Cattle were a vital element in helping to integrate new followers. This sometimes extended to members of other ethnic groups as happened with the Batawana in the panhandle who used exchange of cattle to establish their hegemony over the *Bayei*, and the *Hambukushu* over the *Basarwa*.

By controlling cattle, chiefs also maintained power through social relations such as marriage ties, by dispensing patronage, and performing the intermediary role between the ancestral spirits and the community. The term *kgosi* in Botswana is associated with ruler, king, and chief, also a rich man. "The *kgosi* lent a portion of his cattle to ward headmen. This patronage rested upon the *kgosi*'s personal decision to lend and could be rescinded by him at any time. Accordingly, for a headman who was a commoner not only his office but also, to a great extent, his economic base depended on his personal loyalty to the *kgosi*" (Gulbrandenson 1996, 59). The *kgosi* also regulated agricultural cycle by giving out seeds and allowing for plowing. This way, a chief was able to extract tributary labor, which also provided surpluses for later redistribution (Comaroff and Comaroff 1990).

Several social mechanisms provide the basis for production and exchange of cattle. "Cattle was the media through which men shaped their social biographies and were spoken of as the only heritable wealth of real worth" (Comaroff and Comaroff 1999, 203). *Mahisa*, historically, provided the means of converting wealth-in-cattle into wealth-

in-people. Cattle is borrowed or loaned within local communities through the institution of *mahisa*. This is an arrangement where wealthy farmers give one or two beasts to poorer farmers on a long-term basis. Those who receive the heifer are responsible for taking care of the cattle and in turn can keep the milk and use the offspring for the plowing. Farmers can also keep every third or fourth offspring for building their own herd. As is the case with all such exchanges, the cattle owner receives social recognition and status in the community. He also acquires a "credit" from those to whom he gives cattle and it can be "cashed in" in the form of free labor or other services at times of need.

The recipients of these heifers are allowed to build their own herds. When asked whether they have gotten cattle, and if so from whom, most people in the panhandle villages mentioned the names of a few people from whom they received *mahisa* cattle. While the *mahisa* system at a first glance looks like a leveling mechanism, it is important to recognize that such acts of generosity only enhanced the social differences in society. Those who gave out heifers increased their social status and influence and thus established themselves more thoroughly as a "class" of rulers. The production and exchange of cattle gave form to the pre-colonial political economies of the *Batswana*, *Bayei*, and the *Basarwa*. It is also at the basis of social stratification, provides stability to social relations in the country, and remains closely intertwined with the post-colonial politics of Botswana. That is why the country has often been called a "pastoral democracy" (Parson 1981).

Unlike the groups in the southern part of Botswana which have their paramount chief and local chiefs/headmen, Seronga's customary authority continues to be considered as the "chief's representative" to the area. This arrangement indicates the

peripheral status of Seronga and especially the *Bayei*, in relation to the other dominant ethnic groups. The Tawana paramount chief has historically appointed these representatives. This has not been appreciated by the local *Bayei*, who have increasingly begun to agitate to install their own chief. The authority of the Tawana paramount chief was especially challenged during the 1940s and 1950s. For instance, in the 1940s Chief Moremi decided to remove a representative and replace him with another which caused resentment among the *Bayei*. Moremi's successor, Labani, also had a difficult time getting acceptance from the local Seyei. This led to the suppression of local Seyei cultural expressions. For instance, books in the local language were confiscated and censored. It was not until 1959 that the Seyei finally were able to appoint a *Bayei* chief, Ngambao. With his appointment, plowing for the royal family was stopped.

The northern sandveld is a very poor area compared to much of the rest of Botswana. The residents of Gudigwa consider themselves the *Bukakwe*, thus making them what is perhaps the largest *Basarwa* village in Botswana. The ten families that live in Gudigwa have some form of kinship relations with one another. Until the late 1980s, the family groups lived in smaller settlements around the northern sandveld, but frequently came together regularly for short periods of time ranging from a few days to a couple of months, before fragmenting and dispersing into smaller units (Taylor 2000). Gudigwa village was established in 1988 by the Botswana government under the Remote Area Development Program (RADP). RADP was designed to create new settlements by aggregating smaller settlements to provide basic social services including water, health clinics, schools, and other government inputs. The policy originated as the Bushmen Development Program that started in 1974, but to bring it in line with the Botswana

state's non-racial ideology, the project was classified in 1976 as RADP which was an ethnically neutral technocratic term. Since independence, the modernist ideology of the Botswana state refuses to recognize the existence of minorities or the importance of minority rights in Botswana. Although the *Batswana* have treated the *Basarwa* as their inferiors, the state has reluctantly addressed this discrimination (Hitchcock 2001; Motzafi-Haller 2002).

The village now has the typical elements of villages in Botswana including a *kgotla* public space for meetings, a borehole that provides water, storage rooms to hold government food and input handouts, a health post, a few houses for government workers, a school, and more recently an office building for the newly established Bukakwe Cultural Community Trust (BCCT).

The people of Gudigwa consider their "land" to be the area that they have traditionally inhabited. Historically, families have occupied specific areas, but the boundaries have changed in accordance with shifts in family relations (Taylor 2000). In short, it is control over people that determines usage of land. Nonetheless, certain features tend to be common in the "land ownership" patterns of those who came to settle in Gudigwa. For instance, the territory of each family bordered a supply of permanent water which was in the form of either lagoons or floodplains of the two river systems in the area—the Okavango and Kwando/Linyato river systems. Due to reliance on hunting they moved over wide areas. As Jack Rapula, who used to be a tracker but now also owns a small shop in Gudigwa stated, "We used to travel to different places to hunt. These hunting areas were specified in terms of when they would be used."<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Jack Rapula, interview, Gudigwa, 25 December 2001.

During the drought years, local inhabitants also had special places where they would congregate for the purpose of acquiring water. Since the 1980s, settlements began to typically settle around permanent sources of water. These moves have been necessitated by water shortages and a concern with avoiding conflict among families. "We went to a new place to avoid jealousy and resentment," said Amos Sekondeko, one of the elders in Gudigwa.<sup>16</sup>

In these circumstances, when cattle died or were decimated, their reliance on *mahisa* increased. For instance, after the hardship years in the 1980s, several Gudigwa residents were able to rebuild their herds by receiving *mahisa* cattle from *Bayei* and *Humbukushu* cattle owners.

Table 1-2 below shows the change in cattle ownership in the five settlements.

Table 1-2 Cattle Ownership and Change between 1997 and 2000

	1997				2000			
	cattle	cattle owners	percent	population	cattle	cattle owners	population	percent change
Gudigwa	14	3	21.4%	442	161	14	732	8.7%
Beetsha	150	27	18.0%	1116	267	30	2832	11.2%
Eretsha	349	46	13.2%	428	459	37	630	8.1%
Gunitsoga	549	42	7.7%	166	612	57	556	9.3%
Seronga	1402	110	7.8%	2524	2514	238	3043	9.5%
	2464	228		4676	4013	376	7793	

Gudigwa has the lowest number of cattle among the five villages, while Seronga has the highest number of cattle. Beetsha saw the highest increase in the number of cattle between 1997 and 2000, while Eretsha saw on decline. Seronga which is the largest village in terms of population also had the most number of cattle owners. Figure 1-2 below illustrates these trends.

<sup>16</sup> Amos Sekondeko, interview, Gudigwa, December 15, 2001

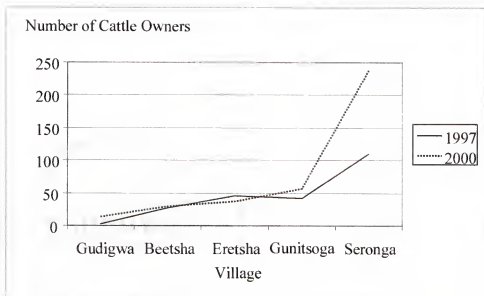


Figure 1-2 Cattle ownership in the five villages in 1997 and 2000

While the story of each family and how its destiny has shifted over time due to draught and invasion of tse tse flies is certainly fascinating, it is beyond the necessary scope of this study. Suffice it to say, however, that historical relations among people in this area are embedded in a history of marginalization whereby local communities resist as well as accommodate the claims of extra-local actors. The question that this study addresses concerns how the modernist ambitions of the Botswana state have affected their livelihoods: Has their incorporation into modernity and capitalist structures, especially through CBNRM, proved to be a blessing or a curse?

Given the significance of cattle and cattle exchange in shaping the political economy of the region, a brief timeline may be helpful to illustrate the main shifts that have occurred through the decades. Table 1-3 summarizes the discussion above.

Table 1-3 History of cattle exchanges

Time period	Historical context	Cattle Exchange
1700-1840	Period of relative "equality." Arrival of the <i>Bayei</i> and the <i>Humbukushu</i> ; encounters with the <i>Basarwa</i> .	Non-commodified
1840-1906	Strengthening and "consolidation" of the <i>Batswana</i> chiefdom; hardening of ethnic categories and hierarchies.	Rise in social status and in social hierarchy via accumulation of cattle
1906-1966	British colonial period: labor reserve; incorporation into South African mining economy.	Control over cattle—both material and symbolic control via <i>mahisa</i>
1966-1996	State discovers diamonds and provides developmental goods	Cattle exchanges via <i>mahisa</i>
1996-2001	CBPP, cattle re-stocking and drought relief	Diversification of wealth away from cattle and <i>decline</i> of <i>mahisa</i>

#### Research Setting: Plateau Region of Zambia's Eastern Province

According to the 1990 census, the population of the Eastern Province was 973,818.

The province had a density of 14.1 persons per square kilometer and its population growth rate at 4 per cent was higher than the rest of country in 1990, which stood at 3.2 percent. The population density is higher in the plateau regions around Katete, Chadiza, and Chipata. Chipata, the provincial capital, has an estimated population of 250,000 and is also the economic hub of the province. Along with the major towns, there are a number of settlement schemes which were established through a rural development policy to provide infrastructure, but most settlements in Eastern Province are comprised of villages of approximately 100 households, typically related to each other. Over 90 % of the population in the province relies on subsistence agriculture (Franzel et al 2004).

The illustrations of Zambia are drawn from ethnographic data from six villages located twenty kilometers east of Chipata, the capital of Eastern Province. These villages are: Mashawa/Mshaba, Ntambusha, Chanzala, Kaluwa, Mishoro, and Lavu. The villages

are spread out in clusters separated by low *dambo* (gardens) areas (singular *dimba*) and elevated *minda* (fields). The low lying *dimba* are fed by seasonal streams, and are usually planted with vegetables such as cabbage, onions, tomatoes, rape, and pumpkins. Some farmers also plant maize in their *dimba*. In the *minda*, farmers plant local and hybrid maize as well as groundnuts in the fields.

The cluster of these six villages was identified because Mashaba is the “pilot” village for the International Center for Research and Agroforestry (ICRAF) and where the IF technology was first introduced for on-farm trials. The six villages are also under the Zambia Integrated Agroforestry Project (ZIAP). I also conducted interviews with farmers in two villages in Katete District: Ndelemani and Kolowera. The arguments were developed through interviews and conversations with several key informants in Chipata (for example, relevant staff of local NGOS such as the ZIAP World Vision project, Cooperative League of USA, Programme Against Malnutrition, and research institutions such as ICRAF).

### **Wealth-in-people and Wealth-in-things: The Ngoni local political economy**

The pre-colonial *Ngoni* polity was constituted amidst the chaos and upheaval of the Mfecane, the cataclysmic events surrounding the wars in southern Africa between the Zulus and their neighbors, including the Afrikaners (Barnes 1954). Not unlike the *Basarwa*, *Bayei* and the *Humbukushu* in the Okavango Delta, the *Ngonis* remained in perpetual movement throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

As a cattle-keeping band which had imbibed military tactics like the Zulu, the *Ngonis*, after temporarily settling among the Tonga near the mouth of the Limpopo River, crossed it in 1835 to settle further north. To this day this crossing is signified as the moment when the *Ngoni* established their polity on the Luangwa Plateau where they



currently reside. Through the 1860s *Ngonis* consolidated themselves as the preeminent military power in the region, under Chief Mpezeni, while at the same time experiencing increased penetration by the British and the Portuguese. By 1898 the confrontation came to a head with expansionary colonial interests for labor recruitment for mining. Under the British South African Company's (BSAC) urging, British forces brought the *Ngonis* under their control (Vail 1977).

Both the *Ngoni* and the *Batawana* have historically attached a social and moral significance to cattle far beyond its economic value, and it has been the basis for consolidating power. The pre-colonial polities were governed within the classic, beer-for-labor and women-for-cattle cycle. Beer and cattle exchanges entailed unequal relations between women and men, and between conquered locals. Beer, a product of the local land, flowed up the hierarchy, from women to men, and from indigenes to royals. As a warrior group, the *Ngonis* measured their wealth in cattle. The cattle byre provided the material and symbolic foundation to the *Ngoni* pre-colonial sociocultural order by providing relative stability to the homesteads as well as forging interconnections between different social levels (Auslander 1996). *Ngoni* settlements included people as well as livestock, where the settlement surrounded the lineage head's cattle byre. It was the first structure that was built when a new village was established and formed the innermost circle around which the other houses were constructed. The closer a house was to the main byre the higher it was in terms of social status. Important men were buried in the settlement's major byre thereby helping assert the claims of his heirs and descendants. The shields of *Ngoni* men were also forged from the back skin of one of their own cows. Since villages moved periodically, the *Ngoni* cattle byres had limited life-spans.

However, even when the settlement moved, this spatial hierarchy was reproduced in relation to the current main byre, from which cattle could be loaned. The anchoring around the byre privileged men. Cattle byres were essentially men's spaces since it was they who cared for and exchanged cattle by raiding, loaning, or making sacrifices to the royals (Auslander 1997, 33-71).

However, in the early decades of the 20th century the cattle population collapsed due to the spread of great rinderpest epizootic and declining soil fertility has emerged as a critical problem (Vail 1977). With the collapse of cattle, festive beer parties were an important mechanism for generalized labor exchange.

Access to labor for expanding agricultural production was frequently negotiated in the process of establishing or reconstituting rural households and communities. Tribute to the chief, which was the norm, had to be coaxed or coerced from the "tribe." The ability of chiefs to control and mobilize tributary labor was a key process through which they established and displayed their power.<sup>17</sup> As settlements split periodically, people moved in different directions. Residence was eventually stabilized only upon the successful negotiation of control over labor. However, the ability to mobilize labor was never guaranteed.

Through the colonial period the *Ngonis* remained tangential to the core copper areas in northern Zambia. Connected only by a bridge, and far from the line of rail, Chipata District and the Eastern Province were linked more closely with neighboring Malawi with whom they also share the ChiChewa-ChiNyanja language. Thus, like the

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<sup>17</sup> The policy of indirect rule which delegated control over labor tributes to the local chiefs also provided the chiefs with salaries which would permit them to substitute hired for tribute labor (see for example, Joseph 1987; Miers and Kopytoff 1977; Kopytoff 1987; Moore and Vaughan 1994).

*Basarwa* in Botswana, the *Ngonis* of Eastern Province have been rather peripheral to state building and state policy. The difference is that because the first president of Zambia came from Eastern Province he was able to dispense patronage in a manner that the *Basarwa* in Botswana never experienced after independence. Both were at the receiving end of state policies, but in one case—Botswana—the people were subjected to systematic “modernization” policies, while in the other—Zambia—they were subjected much more to “pre-modern” patronage gestures.

The 1990s changed the lives of many people in the Eastern Province. One factor was the persistent effects of economic reform, carried out under the auspices of structural adjustment programs. This reduced the relative security that farm households had experienced in earlier days, when fertilizer subsidies and other forms of support were an integral part of political patronage (Bratton 1980). The other factor was the defeat of President Kaunda and his UNIP in the first post independence multi-party elections. Gone was the primary patron of the *Ngonis*. Yet another factor was a severe drought and a crisis of declining soil fertility. State marketing boards had been dismantled due to operational inefficiencies or had collapsed on account of bad credit and were unable to buy the harvests. Government departments had little, if any, resources to distribute and even less capacity to coordinate and manage agricultural activities. Through the 1990s, agricultural inputs became uncertain and more expensive, and outside the reach of most farmers. Harvests were often left rotting at the government grain depots, with no mechanisms to procure, transport, and sell (Gould 1997). During the late 1990s, especially in the years 1999-2001, Zambia went through a severe political and economic crisis. The situation became dire in July 2001, when (due to poor harvests owing to

floods and drought) Zambia had approximately two million people, especially in rural areas, in need of food aid. Food insecurity had become a common aspect in the lives of for many rural *Ngonis*.

These were the realities of the Eastern Province—and much of the rest of Zambia—when I went to the country to conduct field work. Much like Ngamiland, it was an area where local people felt alienated and had suffered a decline in living standards. The question on my mind was, of course, whether there was a chance of recovery and, if so, how that would be carried out. The ZIAP improved fallows project, in collaboration with the ICRAF and the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries (MAFF), provided an environment in which this could be studied.<sup>18</sup> I was in part interested in understanding the project's implementation, but more importantly, how social and political relations were constituted or reconstituted in the context of a weak—if not failing—state. Did the rather tragic situation faced by most rural households contain a "silver lining" in the form of new reciprocities and community solidarities? Or more boldly put, were there enough seeds in informal relationships and institutions that could potentially hold the prospects of a vibrant associational life that would contribute to development in these rural localities?

### Conclusions

As discussed in the previous chapter, the concerns of this study are to show how neither the state nor the market is able to entirely capture local actors; how different forms of rationality clash with each other; and how policies that rely on ideal-typical

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<sup>18</sup> Farmers are encouraged to grow Nitrogen fixing leguminous trees which would provide readily available nutrients, increase soil organic matter and hence improved soil physical conditions. If sustainable and widely adopted, it would reduce (if not eliminate) the dependence on chemical fertilizer. The IF trees inter-planted with maize and grown as fallows during dry seasons capture nitrogen similar to gains from fertilizers. Many argue that these "miracle" improved fallows trees could go a long way toward solving the problem of hunger in Africa (Sanchez 2002).

constructs of markets, states, and communities, result in very different outcomes. With a growing emphasis among international development agencies on such concerns as community based approaches, popular participation, and stakeholder involvement, there is also a need to understand the role of local values and institutions in conservation and development. This new development approach or "paradigm" relates formal and informal institutions against each other in new and complex ways. It elevates "society" and prioritizes a greater role for the priorities of local people in development.

The two cases that I have chosen contrast and complement each other. The nature of state building and consolidation is very different in Zambia than it is in Botswana. The degree of "market integration" is also different because it is higher in Botswana. But the important aspect in both instances is that we are examining peripheral groups and locations who are engaging "modernity on a shoestring" and for whom there have been "no shortcuts for progress."

### CHAPTER 3

#### PERSONAL MARKETS AND IMPERSONAL COMMUNITIES? THE POLITICS OF COMMUNITY CONSERVATION IN BOTSWANA

In Botswana, community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) community conservation broke new ground in the practice of wildlife management, rural development, and tourism. Moving away from a “fortress type” of conservation, CBNRM sought to combine the invisible hand of the market with the reciprocity of local communities and the legal rationality of the state to meet the enviable goals of pro-poor tourism and conservation. This policy of linking wildlife conservation, rural development, and tourism, however, has met with mixed results. Instead of improved resource management, human well-being, and community empowerment, CBNRM these days is criticized for corruption and inefficiency. The view that markets are the panacea has now been replaced by the argument that markets have corrupted local communities (Rozemeijer 2003).

This chapter discusses the transformations in formal and informal institutions that come about when states, private sector actors, and remote rural communities interact in the context of community based conservation. The relationship between safari operators and local communities is thus a critical “site” for analyzing the articulation of formal and informal institutions. It is at these junctures that various actors exhibit their tendencies and institutional logics. As the rest of this chapter will illustrate, current arguments about election malpractices, financial mismanagement, lack of transparency, and corruption can be better understood by viewing them through the lens of informal institutions.

### Reconfiguring Investments in Social Relations: Rupturing the Cattle Complex

In the past people grew millet, sorghum, groundnuts and there were good harvests. These last few years the harvests have not been good...these days life is difficult because of money and no cattle. For someone to survive he/she should be working. Since most people are not working they have a hard time.<sup>19</sup>

The year 1996 in the panhandle is always associated with Cattle Lung Disease/ Bovine pleuropneumonia (CBPP) a bovine disease that afflicted all the cattle in Ngamiland District. There had not been a single case of CBPP in Botswana since 1939.<sup>20</sup> To prevent the spread of lung-sickness, the government killed over 400,000 head of cattle, and constructed new veterinary cordon fences to separate the cattle of Ngamiland from the rest of the country and from wildlife.

The destruction of cattle was a traumatic event. "We wept like children," said Ghaismodimo one of the village elders in Seronga. "The cattle was [sic] like our children and we could not bare to see them slaughtered. They had to drag people away from the *kraals* [enclosure for livestock] when they came to pick up the cattle," he added.

In one stroke, the cattle-lung disease dislocated the material basis of the dominant agro-pastoral mode of production, and shocked the social relations of domination built around cattle. One of the immediate effects of CBPP was the collapse of farming and increased monetization of production, consumption, and social reproduction practices. The "market" emerged as a powerful idiom at nodal points of kinship organization: in funeral rites, marriage ceremonies, and the domestic division of labor.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Interview with GM, Seronga, November 16, 2001.

<sup>20</sup> Elders, however, remember a similar crisis in the region that was related to an outbreak of locusts and Tse Tse in the 1940s and 1970s.

<sup>21</sup> For a discussion of curious blending of market with ritual practices see Geschiere (1997).

Beginning in April 1997, the government started a restocking process and by December had distributed over 70,000 cattle. The restocking was coupled with drought relief projects that were operational until 2001. Some of the funds were devoted to labor-based relief and development projects (LBRDPs) in which people were paid to work on projects such as the debushing of roads. The government established a cash compensation program for the culled livestock, paying 500 Pula (\$100) per animal for 70 percent of their animals, with the other 30 percent of the compensation in kind. The majority of cattle owners decided to receive cash. "There was a lot of money that was suddenly available in the community," said the Mr. Banda, the headmaster of Ngambao High school in Seronga. After CBPP the cattle-boys, youth who grew up at cattle posts and rarely used to be found in the villages, were now found lingering at local bars.

The sudden infusion of money reshaped patterns of production and accumulation. CBPP had contradictory effects on patterns of exchange for both the wealthy and the marginal families. The wealthier cattle owners were able to diversify into other income generating activities while many poorer clients became further marginalized. The destruction of cattle reconfigured patron-client relationships that had been built around the practice of *mafisa*, which entailed long-term loans by wealthy cattle owners to the poorer community members. However, these patron-client relationships were not solely dependent on the *mafisa* cattle. Rather, clients also relied on other kinds of reciprocal relationships that went beyond cattle. Wealthy patrons were in a position to provide for other help including cash loans, clothing, and food. These relationships did not cease after CBPP. Rather, in some cases clients were more dependent on their wealthy patrons



asking for loans, seeking employment, and doing various tasks to receive assistance in kind.<sup>22</sup>

Several local elites, however, also started to recognize that cattle could not be relied on as the sole source for accumulating wealth, and began diversifying their investment “portfolios.” Since the mid 1990s, wealthier individuals from Seronga opened more than thirteen small shops that sold household commodities such as toothpaste, soap, soups, and other household items exported from South Africa. Evoking the positive impact and role of money, one richer cattle owner in the area, KM stated:

Money has changed people's lives. Money has put us in a better stage. There is development because of money. Money has improved farming through hiring other people to plough the fields, buying fence and seeds. Through money we can now buy fishing nets to catch fish and boats to travel to different areas. Money has helped parents to take their children to school by paying for school fees and buying them clothes.<sup>23</sup>

In the modernist discourse of elites such as KM, Seronga is seen a decade behind in development from the sub-district headquarters of Ngamiland, Gumare. Their goal is to get Seronga designated as a sub-district. This designation would lead to more government resources as well as private sector investment. It is no surprise that these days, in anticipation of the tarred road and electricity which are listed in the 2000-05 District Development Plan, every once in a while there are “prospectors” who come to Seronga to scout around for islands around the panhandle.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> I am grateful to an anonymous reviewer of a journal article based on this chapter, for bringing the discussion about *mafisa* to my attention.

<sup>23</sup> KM, Seronga, January 03, 2002.

<sup>24</sup> What was holding back investment, according to investors is the lack of a “management plan” for the area. A management plan would provide formalize property rights regimes and establish guidelines for sustainable resources utilization which would provide a framework for the private investment.

It was in this disruptive local context that CBNRM was introduced. After CBPP, and especially after most people had spent their monetary compensation, people began to pay attention to the CBNRM project.

### **Embeddedness of CBNRM: Formalizing Informal Institutions**

The CBNRM program began in the 1990s. Initiated by the USAID-funded Natural Resource Management Project (NRMP), the program was implemented through the Department of Wildlife and National Parks (DWNP). Under CBNRM, local communities were allocated community management areas and an annual quota of wildlife which could be used for commercial hunting (see below Figure 3-1). The NRMP's approach was to encourage the private sector to operate tourism enterprises in a way that would take into account the needs of rural communities. In the official discourse, the "partnership" between market actors and local communities took a specific form of "joint venture partners" (JVPs). Deploying the legal rationalist formal language of "board" and "trust" and "businessman," policymakers expected that functional community based organizations would be established where all "members" would participate in decision making by freely debating issues, and elect representatives who would represent their communities' demands and operate alongside market actors.

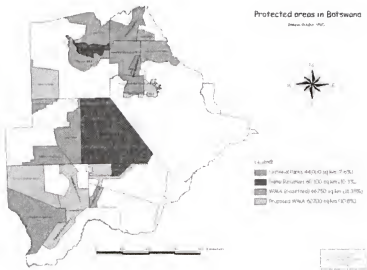


Figure 3-1 Protected Areas in Botswana

Under the new CBNRM policy, if safari operators wanted access to many of the rich wildlife areas of the Okavango Delta, whether for hunting or for photographic tourism, they had to rely on community areas. This required entering into a “sublease” which was a legally binding agreement between a private sector safari firm and a registered entity such as a community based organization (CBO) which would represent “community” interests.

Private safari operators were skeptical about these changes.<sup>25</sup> DP, who had helped establish an association of safari firms, which were predominantly based on

<sup>25</sup> The safari industry in Botswana started in the late 1960s. By the 1980s huge “concessions” were controlled by a few foreign owned safari companies. Tourism accounts for about 40 percent of employment opportunities that have been created in the northern part of Botswana. Investment by the private sector in the Botswana economy as a whole has increased from P150m to P500m over the past ten years. To encourage the flow of benefits to *Botswana* and participation by local communities, the government established a new land use system based on smaller Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs). WMAs were officially recognized through the Wildlife Conservation Policy of 1986. These areas now cover 22 percent of Botswana’s land and are set aside exclusively for wildlife utilization or land use that is compatible with wildlife. In 1989 there was also a re-zoning of all Controlled Hunting Areas (CHAs) which were administrative blocks used by the Department of Wildlife and National Parks (DWNP) to administer hunting quotas. In the new land use plan Botswana has also been divided into 163 CHAs for various types of wildlife utilization: commercial photographic areas, commercial wildlife utilization (hunting) areas, community managed wildlife utilization and livestock areas, community photographic areas, and un-

“consumptive use of wildlife” through commercial hunting, summarized the sentiments of the safari operators:

The whole process was pulled off came as surprise [sic]. The Wild Life Act of 1992 and Tourism policy were integrated. The two departments got together. It was driven at the ministerial level. Since the process has been top down there is a lot of catching up to do at the bottom. We are still at a stage where several issues need to be resolved.<sup>26</sup>

This was compounded by the uncertainties that would result from the new regulations that required community collaborations. For some safari operators, participation and community input was seen as potentially hindering their efficiency. Professional hunters often relied on local communities for trackers and skimmers or had hired them in low paying “unskilled” positions at the tourist camps in the Delta or in Maun. CBNRM challenged established hierarchies between the wealthier, predominantly white safari operators and poorer local communities.

Community concessions through CBNRM, however, also provided new opportunities. Under the new formal rules of CBNRM, safari operators could now access additional wildlife areas by collaborating with remote rural communities. For many safari operators in the Okavango Delta, access to the community wildlife management areas is important because most commercial areas have long-term leases. To maintain access to an area, and thus remain in business, safari operators had to convince rural communities to cooperate with them.

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designated areas. The WMAs and CHAs provided the foundation of a new property rights system on which CBNRM was implemented.

<sup>26</sup> DP interview, Maun 20 June 1999.

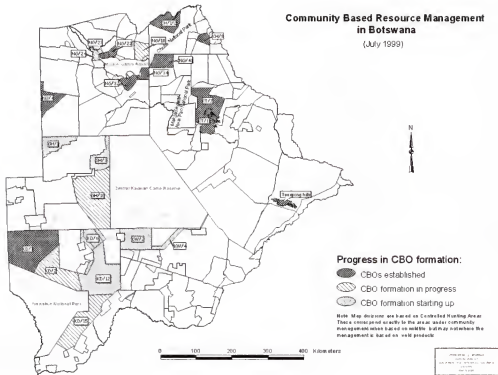


Figure 3-2 Map of CBNRM projects in Botswana after three years of implementation

The CBNRM process by bringing together these diverse actors—private sector safari operators and remote communities residing in the Okavango Delta—with different institutional logics created uncertainties, but also provided new opportunities. For both, local communities and private safari operators, CBNRM was an opportunity to gain access to and control over land and resources.

### The Tender and Renewal Debate

In 2000, the five villages of Seronga, Gudigwa, Gunitsoga, Eretsha, and Beetsha had to decide whether they would cease or continue their partnership with the safari operator. The only way the safari operator could maintain access to profitable wildlife areas was by convincing local community members. In the months leading up to the vote, there was intense debate about the issue in the five villages. At the local bars, houses which sold *bojalwa* (locally brewed beer), tuck-shops, and other places in the

villages where people often gathered informally, individuals took part in heated arguments and held competing and divergent positions about renewing the *lekgoa* (white) businessman's contract or going for a re-tender.<sup>27</sup> Those who supported the renewal usually argued about the benefits of keeping the safari operator. Highlighting the positive contribution of the safari operator, KT, the chairman of the village development committee, stated:

The safari operator has kept his promises to the community. If we go for re-tender, the safari operator will remove all the equipment in the concessions and fire all the employees at the (safari) camps. I don't think the new safari company will be able to employ as many people in the first year.<sup>28</sup>

A similar argument was made by KM, an OCT board member, "[L]ook at the problems of OCT. It is because of the board and not the businessman. The JVP has paid his amount, but the community does not have development. This is because the [OCT] board has many problems."<sup>29</sup>

Those who wanted re-tender hinted that improprieties had taken place and "people" were talking about corruption by some of the board members. More often than not, statements made in public were with regard to the "performance" of the safari operator, and whether or not there were sufficient benefits from the partnership. At the tuck-shop run by *Kgosi Maeze*, the discussion about renewal and re-tender was also about monetary benefits: "We just want more money. Whoever gives us more money, we will select them." MK, a member of Seronga's village trust committee also opined, "[H]e [the safari

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<sup>27</sup> The word *lekgoa* literally means "the one that was spit out" which refers to the notion that the white people first seen by *Batswana* came out of the sea like they were spit out by the sea. I am grateful to one of the anonymous reviewers of a forthcoming journal article based on this chapter for this insight.

<sup>28</sup> KT, interview, Seronga, 28 March, 2001.

<sup>29</sup> KM, interview, Gudigwa, 20 March 2001.

operator] promised us a tractor, boreholes, and a training school [for tourism]. None of this has happened. Maybe a new safari company will provide us with these benefits.”<sup>30</sup>

The outcome of the elections was uncertain. Under standard recipe-like rules and regulations of the government’s CBNRM policy, only after the district level technical committee approved the proposal submitted by private operators, they were allowed to “canvass” to local communities. This meeting took place on October 15, 2000 and was attended by the key “stakeholders: the OCT “Board of Trustees” including the elected chairperson of each village level committee; representatives of the private sector which included the owner, managers, and community liaison officers; and government officials from the district including the Department of Wildlife and National Parks (DWNP), the Northwest District Council, and the Land board.

The five villages voted from October 16<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup>, 2000 to decide whether they would remove or continue their partnership with the safari company.

Table 3-1 Results of Tender and renewal elections

Village	For Re-Tender	For Renewal	Total
Gudigwa	62	11	73
Beetsha	12	36	48
Eretsha	41	84	125
Gunitsoga	60	0	60
Seronga	31	65	96
Total	206	196	402

Two hundred six people from the five villages voted for a re-tender, while one hundred ninety six people voted to renew the safari company's contract. But even though more votes had been cast in favor of a re-tender, three of the five villages had voted for renewal. The debate at the *kgotla* was cantankerous. Did the villages vote to end their

<sup>30</sup> Participant Observation, Seronga, April 03, 2001.

partnership with the safari operator and call for a new tender, or had they renewed the contract?

Wildlife officials addressed *kgotla* meetings and advised board members to follow the rules and do the right thing (which, in their minds, was not to renew the contract of the current operator and instead opt for a re-tender). Government officials overseeing the elections declared that the total number of votes should be tabulated since the benefits from OCT were distributed equally. Since the majority of votes were in favor of re-tender, the contract of the safari operator would not be renewed.

On the following Monday, October 23, 2000 the OCT board, through a letter to the Land Board, invited the safari operator to enter into negotiations for renewal. Around the same time, BM, the chief's eldest son, and HM, the nephew of the previous district councillor, mobilized several people to write to the District Commissioner (DC) in Maun and the Minister of Local Government and Lands in Gabarone, to intervene (in favor of a re-tender). The eldest son of the chief and the nephew of an important person had gone against the wishes of their fathers and other elders of the village who now supported the OCT board. By asking the state to intervene, BM and those who supported a re-tender hoped that they could bolster their position. BM and MP were not acting alone, but had been supported by their age-mates, many of whom had been to primary or secondary school together and used to frequently meet at the local bars, tuck-shops, etc. The younger generation was getting frustrated with the lack of employment opportunities in the panhandle villages and with the old ways of the *madalas* (elders). By appealing for intervention by the state, these young individuals not only indicated that they wanted change, but they also risked disrespecting their elders.



In response, the Tawana Land Board threatened to withhold the lease. The District Commissioner also intervened by holding *kgotla* meetings in the five villages from February 8-10, 2001 to find out whether local communities preferred to uphold the results of the renewal-tender and whether the counting should be based on a majority of people who voted or votes per village.

Table 3-2 Voting on procedures for renewal and tender elections

Village	Individual votes	Votes by Village
Gudigwa	98	5
Betsha	70	6
Eretsha	7	45
Gunitsoga	89	0
Seronga	98	68
Total	360	124

The election's results this time seemed to leave no doubt about the outcome. Three hundred sixty people (and four of the five villages) voted to count the individual votes rather than the number of villages.

The safari operator, however, had disagreed with these results. He evoked the formal CBNRM guidelines in his defense claiming that the OCT constitution (which also functions as a notary deed, i.e., gives OCT status as a legal entity under Botswana law) did not specify whether the number of villages or total number of votes should be counted. The safari operator along with the management of OCT argued that all benefits from OCT (employment, quota fees, etc.) are distributed equally to each village, and since the constitution did not clearly specify the voting procedures, the voting should be considered according to number of villages.

The safari operator also complained to the Department of Wildlife and National Parks (DWNP) and the Directorate of Economic Crimes and Corruption (DCEC) that

another safari operator was illegally canvassing in the area and that money was paid to specific people in the villages to vote against renewal.<sup>31</sup> In addition, the safari operator protested against the behavior of government officials, pointing out that during the election, some of the people working at the safari camps were not able to vote, since they were not present in their home villages when the voting took place. Further, government officials also prevented them from voting in another village and during the elections in Gudigwa there was a shouting match between those who wanted to renew the safari operator's contract and those who wanted a re-tender. The Gudigwa headman told people that if they voted for renewal they would have to face the consequences.

During the five years of the safari operator's contract, many key people from the villages had benefited from OCT. One of the ex-board members hinted at the use of a sitting allowance as an incentive, "[I]n the past the sitting allowance was 100 Pula...now the board gets 800 Pula. The workers get much less...but board gets 800, this is not good."<sup>32</sup> Under the OCT constitution board members received 85,000 Pula every year as a "sitting allowance" to attend the trust's meetings.

After several months of heated public debates and closed meetings, the result went in the safari operator's favor. The OCT board had the final authority to interpret the constitution and decide whether the safari operator's contract could be renewed. The Board decided to consider the number of villages (3-2) rather than the number of people as the real outcome of the elections. They argued that because the constitution was silent

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<sup>31</sup> The supporters of the safari operators argued that another safari operator who lived in the area and had an interest in a re-tender instigated the 'rebellion' by BM and his age mates. If the partnership was renewed it would be another five years before anyone could make a bid for the community areas.

<sup>32</sup> PM, personal interview, Gunitsoga, July 20, 2001.

as to whether they should consider the number of villages or total number of votes, and because the constitution gives the Board the final authority to make this determination, their decision to consider the number of villages, in effect renewing the contract of the safari operator, was to serve as the final say.

Yet, the situation remained tense and highly charged. This was evident during the elections of the Village Trust Committees (VTCs), which took place after the new contract had been signed. Many of the problems that had emerged during the renewal and re-tender debate persisted.

### **Stirrings of a Countermovement?**

Initially it was unclear whether the VTC elections would take place. The manager of the OCT (who had been appointed by the safari operator) complained that the district level Technical Action Committee (TAC) members were dragging their feet and avoiding committing to a date. Government officials blamed OCT for the uncertainties. According to them, the OCT board should have decided the dates and announced them at the Annual General Body Meeting (AGM). However, the AGM had not taken place since its purpose was to present the previous year's accounts which had not been prepared.

The first election took place in Gudigwa at the village *kgotla*. Initially it was unclear who was responsible for the process and the procedures for the elections. Government officials attending maintained that it was the OCT board's and the management's responsibility to lay out the procedures and direct the process. Board members and the OCT manager, on the other hand, said that the board's tenure was over and hence it was the technical committee who had managed the previous elections, and they did not know what was supposed to be done. After much deliberation it was decided

that the headman of Gudigwa would conduct the proceedings. They agreed to nominate fifteen people, of which twelve were to be elected. The elections would take place by asking those who were attending to stand for each candidate.

In Seronga the elections were supposed to begin at 8:00 am, but the people started arriving at the village *kgotla* at 8:30 am. The chief opened the meeting by asking who had called the *kgotla*, since there was no notification. He was unsure whether they should go ahead with the elections since most of the community members had not been informed. The government officials also addressed the meeting and said that since the date was not announced at the AGM, the elections might not be constitutional. They would have to consult the Land Board's lawyer and the Attorney General in Gabarone for advice. Eventually, the chief agreed to nominate candidates and proceed with the election.

Although various individuals tried to nominate someone by raising their hands, the chief did not call on everyone present, and certain people began to complain. At one point, after asking if he could speak, a young man admonished the chief, stating that the process was biased and the chief was playing favorites. The chief's response was short and terse—he denied any type of discrimination at his *kgotla*. After this comment, the dissenters kept quiet. The nominees included some of the previous committee members as well as new individuals, including the chief's wife, his son from his first wife (who had also lobbied against renewing the safari operator's contract), an ex-councilor, and others who had not served on the previous committee.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> One of the nominees was my research assistant who was attending the meeting to cover the proceedings. She had not planned on standing for the elections and at that time was not involved with OCT's activities. However, her family members attending the meeting nominated her and she was also elected.

The chief called the names of each candidate and people supporting them stood up. The government officials counted the votes and determined that three members from the previous VTC had won the re-election. The chief's wife and his son received the maximum number of votes. The chairman of the previous VTC received fewer votes than most of the nominees.

In Beetsha, the deputy-headman directed the proceedings since the headman was away. The process was rather animated during the nomination stage. Individuals were wildly waving their hands to attract the headman's attention. Government officials had to intervene several times to ask them to calmly raise their hands. The majority of people nominated were from the previous VTC, but the chairman of the VTC was not re-elected.

#### **The Bukakwe Cultural Community Trust: "Ancient in a Modern World"**

"Gudigwa Camp offers guests a rare opportunity to explore the rich cultural heritage of the Bukakhwe-one of the indigenous San Bushman peoples of the Okavango Delta. Their camp highlights the intimate connection between the Bukakhwe's cultural heritage and the surrounding natural environment.... experience the traditional lifestyle of the Bukakhwe through authentic activities....including dancing, storytelling and bush walks.... developed by the Bukakhwe Cultural Conservation Trust that represents all the people of Gudigwa Village....largest remaining Bushman village in Botswana, the Gudigwa people are proud to be promoting this cross-cultural exchange with guests while reviving their traditional way of life."<sup>34</sup>

"Hunting is our birthright, and we will not give it up."<sup>35</sup>

Gudigwa residents were the most reluctant to accept the safari operator for another five years. The *Basarwa* had increasingly become resentful about the performance of the OCT and they were mainly concerned that the benefits from the private sector operator

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<sup>34</sup> Description about Gudigwa listed on the website of safari companies operating in the Okavango Delta. Last visited: July 25, 2005 (<http://www.places.co.za/html/9266.html>)

<sup>35</sup> Public statement by a village elder at a *kgotla* meeting about CBNRM, July 15, 2001.

were not being fairly allocated to the five villages. Expressing the community's dissatisfaction, GP, one of the more vocal of the youth pointed out:

The money goes to the board and they control how the money is spent. Even here in Gudigwa, I think that the Jacksons are being bribed. I think the private sector is manipulating the [community] board, they give false information and the board comes back and force [sic] us to agree with whatever they have arranged with the private sector.<sup>36</sup>

The safari operator had promised to employ people from the panhandle villages in the camps. However, there was a strong perception among the *Bukakwe* that they were being discriminated against in the employment opportunities. "People are hired without due process. OCT leaders are crooks, they twist things so that their villages can benefit. Leaders look out for their family when it comes to employment." Overall, there was the sense that Gudigwa had been mistreated in the CBNRM project. Emphasizing this point, one of the elder's bemoaned:

They do not assist us as agreed...for funerals they fail to provide coffins. Some bodies were buried in blankets. They had promised that they will look after the villages equally. But Gudigwa has been neglected. They failed to even build a house for the radio.<sup>37</sup>

The *Bukakwe* Cultural Community Trust (BCCT) emerged from social mobilization in response to the marginalization by the state, private sector actors, and neighboring communities. State policies in the 1970s and 1980s transformed the resource rights of the *Basarwa* (Hitchcock 1982), first by transforming their hunting rights to access to the Delta into "free game licenses" and then into a "hunting quota." However, when community projects were established, the government removed these rights, and transferred the "hunting quota" to the other four neighboring villages, which

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<sup>36</sup> GP, personal interview, Gudigwa, 25 August, 2001.

<sup>37</sup> TT, personal interview, Gudigwa, June 10, 2001.

essentially constituted the Okavango Community Trust. Amos, one of the elders from Gudigwa, expressed his hostility by arguing:

The *Basarwa* should be free on their land. We really need to be separated from the *Mbukushu* and the *Bayei* since they are regarded as important from us. The Kaporota camp should be allocated to us; if not, one from your camps should by any means be given to the *Basarwa*, since we are the original inhabitants of this area.<sup>38</sup>

Indeed, for the *Basarwa*, their identity as the “first people of the Kalahari” is tied to historical rights over land, and hunting as a way of life which highlighted their differences from other neighboring communities (Hitchcock 1993; Saugestad 2000; Taylor 2000). Many *Basarwa* initially resisted this incorporation. The combined factors of their relocation to Gudigwa in 1988, the creation of a special hunting quota, and then becoming a part of the OCT which was dominated by the *Seyei* and the *Sumbukushu* their “owners” in pre-colonial Botswana, all culminated to increase their sense of deprivation and in turn create an impulse to start their own project. By participating in the tourism market and proposing their own community based organization they would struggle against historical patterns of exclusion. It seems that resistance by the *Basarwa* is in the form of their claim on CBNRM. Colin, one of the active participants in the newly formed “Mosarwa Trust” asked me if I wanted a T-shirt. The print on the T-shirt was “Ancient in a Modern World” along with the logo of the newly created community trust, BCCT. Colin was proud of the T-shirt since it symbolized their identity as *Basarwa*, especially their hunting-gathering livelihood.<sup>39</sup> The best the *Basarwa* could do was to get

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<sup>38</sup> AS, *kgotla* meeting, Gudigwa, July 15, 2001.

<sup>39</sup> Interview and participant observation, author, December 2001.

their “own” ecotourism project, which commodifies their culture making them curiously ancient in a modern world.

### **Embeddedness of CBNRM in Botswana**

The OCT tender and renewal debate, elections of the village trust committees, and the establishment of BCCT raise pertinent questions about the role of informal institutions and the state in CBNRM. In a climate of distrust between the state and the private sector, the prevailing assumption has been that CBNRM is, first and foremost, about rural development and conservation. From the state’s perspective, therefore, as well as that of international donors and conservation NGOs, participatory approaches to conservation help protect communities, in this case, against safari operators. Participation is a bulwark against privileging the profit motives of the private sector and against the variety of means—legal, extra-legal, personal relationships, material incentives, and threats of making local trusts bankrupt—that actors in the private sector are prepared to use to co-opt and manipulate communities to control local people and resources.<sup>40</sup>

During the tender and renewal debate, the behavior of state actors was consistent with these expectations as they applied, at various levels, a number of strategies that included court injunctions, visits by the District Commissioner, and a stern letter to the local chief from the central minister. In *kgotla* meetings, state officials made it clear that they wanted the trust to act like an egalitarian, efficient, and legal-rational community

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<sup>40</sup> Governmental and non-governmental organizations also point out that the OCT constitution was created by a lawyer hired by the safari operator without much consultation or participation by the communities. The constitution, which was in English, gave most of the power to the private sector and the OCT board. The board could make decisions without consulting the community. The constitution was also vague about several aspects of the CBNRM procedures (for example, election and re-tender procedures, rules of canvassing, etc.).



organization. Wildlife officials advised Board members to follow the rules and do the right thing, which, from their point of view, was not to renew the contract of the current safari operator and instead opt for a re-tender. Berating community members and the board at one of the *kgotla* meeting's, a state official said:

You [the Board] are elected in bad times, because I have a letter from the minister complaining about what the Board did. Now this is your only chance to correct this mistake. You have made a conflict between the private sector and the government because of the Board.

The safari operator and the OCT managers instead cited "mismanagement" as the main problem of OCT. They blamed the first chairman of the OCT board for usurping power and taking unilateral decisions without even informing the other board members. They pointed to the mismanagement of financial resources. Board members would go to Maun with the money from the trust to buy supplies, but return with goods which were worth much less and state that the rest had been spent on fuel and accommodation. They also received credit, which was never returned, from local shops in Maun. The OCT bought stock worth 487,000 Pula and had sales for 300,000 Pula when they should have earned at least 600,000 Pula. In 1998, the board also decided to pay its members 1,500 Pula per month as a "sitting allowance," but after the trust's lawyer pointed out that this was unconstitutional under the laws of Botswana, they now receive 800 Pula as sitting allowance for each of the four board meetings that are scheduled every year and the VTC members were paid 300 Pula.

In the end, however, state actors, and especially the wildlife officials who were charged with overseeing CBNRM projects, had limited influence.<sup>41</sup> The Board signed a

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<sup>41</sup> There are other instances when actions by local communities seem contrary to economic cost-benefit rationales. In Sankuyu, another community project under CBNRM, the local community decided to select a safari operator who was offering a substantially smaller amount of money rather than the highest bidder.

new contract with the safari operator. So the question then becomes: What factors explain the state's role in CBNRM projects in Botswana?

### **Investing in Social Relations: One Face of Embeddedness**

In April 2001, the *kgosi* (chief) of Gunitsoga passed away. The ceremonies lasted for many days and the funeral itself was a public affair where most of the important people of the area attended. All the chiefs of the Okavango region attended this funeral. People even came from as far as Gaborone, Botswana's capital, to pay their respects. The safari operator also attended the funeral along with his managers. During the funeral, it was announced that the safari operator was not only paying for the casket, but had also given money for two cows. Usually at funerals only chiefs and immediate male relatives speak, but at the Gunitsoga chief's funeral, the safari operator was one of the initial few people to address those who had gathered to express their condolences. In his speech to those attending, the operator expressed his gratitude to the people for allowing him the privilege of contributing to the chief's funeral.<sup>42</sup>

After the funeral, several individuals praised the safari operator's gesture. In acting as such, he illustrated that he was one of them and showed that he cared for his people. However, there were also those who pointed out that if it had been a funeral for a common person, the safari operator would not have been there. It is not uncommon these days to hear community members demand safari operators to meet their needs of employment, transportation, meat, and help during funerals. This expectation is

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The Wildlife Department withheld the hunting quota of the community (and in turn of the safari operator), because, from the perspective of state actors, these were economically irrational decisions.

<sup>42</sup> In Botswana, customary authorities are important figures. While the powers of chiefs have declined, they still command deference from their "subjects." When a chief passes away, the funeral arrangements reflect a particular chief's power and prestige.

enunciated in public at the *kgotla* as well as in private meetings. In the five panhandle villages of the Okavango Delta the safari operator is commonly called *sephalana*, which implies a chief's granary, but now is also a name of a retail store in Maun. During times of food insecurity in the past, community members would turn to chiefs and other elites for help. Historically, people expected chiefs to provide for the community; currently, however, there is also the expectation in the panhandle villages that the along with the state, safari operators are also benevolent patrons and should be there in times of the community's need. Underlying the material contributions and presence of the safari operator at the chief's funeral are symbolic gestures that "speak" to the norms and expectations of rural communities. By contributing to and attending the funeral, the safari operator had shown his benevolence toward the community and reinforced his standing as someone who would be there during times of need. By renaming the safari operator in the idiom of granaries and a provider of welfare, the local people were also evoking an embedded patron-client relationship which was more familiar and locally meaningful than that of a business man as an "autonomous" market actor.<sup>43</sup>

### **Diamonds Are Not Forever: The Embeddedness of the Botswana state**

Botswana has often been described as a pastoral democracy. The dominant ideology of the state in Botswana has been as much about reshaping society and nature as about satisfying elite interests. However, unlike other African countries, the ruling elites in Botswana have not appropriated resources to benefit themselves, but they have been

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<sup>43</sup> Safari operators also rely on intermediaries to work with local communities. They, for example cannot fire staff without consulting with the board. The community liaison officer, SK who was the brother of the local Member of Parliament would convince the Board members as to the reasons for firing someone. The position of a 'community liaison officer' was established to mediate a wide range of issues about managing the community trust's activities, concerns about employees at the camps, and even disagreements between different villages.

able to foster their interests as a corporate group, and thus been able to establish themselves as a dominant class. Botswana's political elites, most of whom are also cattle barons, have historically supported the livestock sector to the detriment of other economic sectors as evident in the unequal holding of cattle wealth (Peters 1994).

After independence, stability was maintained by managing the economic interests of large cattle owners who were politically influential. According to Harvey and Lewis (1990, 9), "Botswana's government was largely a government of cattlemen." The first President of Botswana, Seretse Khama, was a customary chief and like other elites, a large cattle owner. Samatar (1999, 69-70), for example, also illustrates this by pointing out that a majority of parliamentarians in the National Assembly serve as medium or large size cattle owners. The dominant Botswana Development Party (BDP) was a coalition of commoners and chiefs who had integrated rural localities by cementing relations through the distribution and exchange of cattle. In Botswana, "the members of the BDP and the political elite that emerged after 1966 had important interests in the cattle industry, the main productive sector of the economy. This meant that it was in the interests of the elite to build infrastructure and generally develop institutions which promoted not only national development, but also their own economic interests" (Acemoglu et al., 2001, 44). During the first decades after independence, development focused on the cattle sector. As Good (1986) argues, that infrastructure was developed in the interests of the elites in the BDP, who as farmer politicians were interested in consolidating their positions.

Botswana is also regarded as a success story because the state's development project has been promulgated as an ethnically neutral process whereby the state is cast as

a benevolent provider of resources and services, irrespective of status (Samatar 1999, 14-15; also see Gulbrandsen 1996). As a “developmental state” it has intervened in the economy and provided sound macroeconomic management of diamond resources very much like the successful development states in East Asia (Du Toit 1995; Picard 1987; Stedman 1993). While the Botswana state is bureaucratically robust, however, it has been unable or unwilling to mobilize local communities, spur local innovation, or re-distribute wealth to reduce the growing gap between the rich and the poor, especially between the urban and rural populations. In Botswana, unemployment was estimated at about 20 percent, while half the population of 1.6 million was income poor in 2000. Income distribution is also skewed, with the poorest 40 percent receiving 12 percent of total national income in 1994 compared to 59 percent for the richest 20 percent.

One explanation of Botswana’s lopsided development attributes it to a limited absorptive capacity and the size and spatial distribution of the population. Being physically equivalent to the size of France but with a population of only about 1.6 million, it cannot create sufficient “absorptive capacity” for domestic production. In many rural settlements, consumer populations are too small to sustain economic activity on a scale that could make an impact on unemployment and poverty reduction (Acemoglu et al. 2001). Along with these ‘structural’ impediments, the nature of the state and its relationship to society provides additional insights about the development process in Botswana.

The why the Botswana state has limited success in mobilizing society for participatory development is due to the unique political economy with its heavy reliance on diamonds. Coupled with financial resources not affordable to most other developing

countries and elites who in general are not tempted to appropriate state resources, the state has provided the basic developmental goods to rural localities. Because diamonds provide the state with sufficient revenues, the Botswana state has no reason (and does not need) to extract resources (for example, taxes) from society (Du Toit 1995). Remote rural areas, such as the panhandle villages of the Okavango Delta, have historically been “given” developmental goods and their “mobilization” for development activities is simultaneously a mechanism for their cooptation.

The image of a reluctant state unable or unwilling to relinquish some of its powers is an important aspect of statecraft in Botswana. Various land use policies implemented through the 1970s as well as CBNRM exemplify the Botswana state’s high modernist leanings, where the relations of paternalistic care-taking and social control reduce the capacity of improvisation on the part of local communities. James Scott’s discussion of a high modernist administrative is useful here:

[T]he legibility of society provides the capacity for large-scale social engineering, high-modernist ideology provides the desire, the authoritarian state provides the determination to act on that desire, and an incapacitated civil society provides the leveled social terrain on which to build (Scott 1998, 5).

CBNRM was created with the help of the state, delivered to the doorsteps of remote communities by international consultants, and has been shaped by and contributed to concessionary politics in the Okavango Delta. Notwithstanding the enabling rhetoric of local empowerment and participation, in its current version, CBNRM is designed to co-opt local communities into adopting official priorities for development and conservation, rather than allowing local communities to constitute *their* version of community conservation (also see Taylor 2000; Twyman 2000). In Gudigwa, for example, the history of the marginalization of the Basarwa is closely intertwined with their

contemporary claims on the state. In the past, the representations of them as “savage and uncivilized,” and “of the bush,” became justification for servitude, while in the present the Basarwa are portrayed in the assimilationist modernist jargon of the post-colonial Botswana state. This relationship of the state with society suggests that it does not recognize the role of practical knowledge and informal processes, and its top-down, paternalistic approach reduces the capacity of improvisation on the part of local communities in the face of uncertainty.<sup>44</sup>

### **Paternalism or Participation? Investing in Social Relations**

For the first five years of OCT, the village level committees were not empowered to take decisions and most of the money was not invested in other villages. After the renewal and re-tender debate the safari operator also changed his tune. Following the renewal of the contract, the safari operator, along with several members of management, addressed *kgotla* meetings in each of the villages, thereby informing them about hiring a manager in the safari camps specifically to deal with issues relating to local communities. There were also proposals to begin construction on the delayed projects in Gudigwa and Eretsha.

The tender/renewal debate provided an opportunity for local communities to pay greater attention to issues of participation and empowerment. This was evident during the elections of the Village Trust Committees (VTCs), which took place after the new contract had been signed. Many (but not all) of the VTC members who were rumored to

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<sup>44</sup> The problem with a state's high modernist ideology is that the “designed or planned social order is necessarily schematic; it always ignores essential features of any real, functioning social order and excludes the necessary role of local knowledge and know-how” (Scott 1998, 4).

have taken “gifts” or benefited personally from the safari operator and had not represented the interests of the community were not elected.

Local communities were becoming cognizant that a balance had to be found between wisdom of the *madalas* and the education of the youth. BM and several other younger community members were elected to the VTCs. People in the villages had now realized that the constitution, which was written without input from the community, was responsible for creating the ambiguity about the election rules. With help from a local NGO, the constitution of OCT was translated from English to Setswana, and VTC members were “sensitized” about the bylaws. This was the first step for many people towards taking responsibility of “their” community trust.<sup>45</sup>

### Conclusion

Market actors in Botswana’s tourism sector often complain that there is a lack of business sense in local communities. They are especially impatient with CBNRM projects that mandate community-private sector cooperation and which they believe are inherently more complicated and, therefore, less profitable than private concessions. It is, of course, demanding to work with illiterate rural communities and with “traditional” decision making, which is often viewed as slow and inefficient. It is true that remote rural communities like those in the Okavango Delta lack the sorts of business expertise, accounting skills, and marketing techniques necessary for the successful functioning of modern firms. But it is an oversimplification, as this chapter has argued, to characterize

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<sup>45</sup> Throughout OCT’s existence, a British donor supported NGO was providing technical training and support to the five villages. It is noteworthy that the final assessment of the project also supports the perspective that there was manipulation by the private sector. See “Through Our Eyes ACORD’s Experience in CBNRM,” (October, 2002), available at <[http://www.acord.org.uk/Publications/ACORD percent20Botswana percent20Experience percent20with percent20OCT.pdf](http://www.acord.org.uk/Publications/ACORD%20Botswana%20Experience%20with%20OCT.pdf)> (last visited August 05, 2004).



rural communities as ignorant and disorganized without carefully examining the interactions that the private sector actors and the state have with them.

The CBNRM approach assumed that there was a direct link between economic “incentives” or “benefits” and the conservation of wildlife and other natural resources. The pithy statement summarized the basic assumptions of CBNRM: “If wildlife needs to be saved, it needs to pay for itself” (NRMP 1999). Couched in the technical language of decentralization and local level empowerment, external state and non-governmental organizations established the CBNRM framework that included various formal rules and regulations such as management plans for specific wildlife management areas and “joint venture agreements” to govern the relationship of local communities with private sector operators.

The problem with this approach in practice was that it did not account for informal institutions. In practice, as we saw in the previous sections, commitments and obligations toward the formal realm cannot be understood unless we attend to informal institutions—the recurrent patterns of interpersonal interactions of everyday life and interpersonal networks in which these actors are embedded. Informal institutions in the form of reciprocal and personalistic exchanges may be either vertical or lateral. They are ubiquitous, but as this chapter shows, they become especially manifest and influential in situations where formal structures are incomplete and ambiguous. They become vertical, i.e., clientelistic, in situations where one actor is already more powerful or well-endowed than the others. When multiple and competing interests become apparent, elites capture the developmental benefits and typically this results in blaming the intended beneficiaries of conservation. The case of the tour operator is a good case in point, but so are the

relationships between the dominant *Batawana* and the minority *Bayei*, and especially the *Basarwa*. This process is as much influenced by the state's paternalistic view of local people, as "children who need to grow up," as it is by market actors who mask and weave their profit motives through idioms of local reciprocity.

From the perspective above, one could argue that demands of primary forms of face-to-face reciprocity and re-distributive mechanisms undermine the formal institutional realm and rational pursuit of the instrumental goals of CBNRM. Resources embedded in primary social relationships that rely on the notion of investment of social relations blur the boundaries between informal social norms and legal rational rules, but they are not always regressive. They also can enable actors to act in "progressive ways." As we saw from the instance of the renewal and re-tender debate and the creation of BCCT, local actors use their incomplete incorporation in CBNRM, as an opportunity to transform the rules and responsibilities of conservation and development under CBNRM. It is thus not sufficient to label these practices as "corruption," "lack of transparency," or "financial mismanagement."

The experience of the northern sandveld villages in Botswana is a reminder that legitimate and accountable conservation regimes—whether community based or trans-boundary—do not come pre-packaged and already assembled for success. Their formation is fundamentally a *political* process and hence it is critical, as this chapter has suggested, to pay closer attention to the role of politics, power and culture. The critique then should not be about "community," but to recognize intra-community differences, incorporate an understanding of power structures, as well as potential for cooperative collective action (see for example, Brosius 2004; Li 1996). The conclusion that can be

drawn from this study is that the next generation of conservation regimes (also see for example, Murphree 2004) ought to guard against “naive assumptions of local homogeneity and discreteness” (Agrawal and Gibson 1999) and reject simplistic claims that “if wildlife needs to protect itself, it needs to pay for itself.” Thus, rather than reject communal approaches to conservation, we should pay greater attention to how the prospects for conservation and rural development are actually shaped by interactions among the divergent institutional logics of markets, states, and communities.

#### CHAPTER 4

### WORKING IS CELEBRATING: TRANSFORMATION OF LABOR POOLING IN EASTERN ZAMBIA

The 1990s in the Ngoni villages of the Eastern Province and the panhandle villages of Botswana's Okavango Delta were a time of crisis, but the predicament of the rural communities in each area was different. The decade started with a drought and a growing awareness among local farmers that their land had lost its fertility. After the implementation of structural adjustment policies, access to agricultural inputs (especially chemical fertilizers) had become difficult. Government departments had little, if any, resources to distribute and even less capacity to coordinate and manage agricultural activities. State marketing boards had been dismantled due to inefficiencies and/or had collapsed on account of bad credit; thus, they were unable to buy the harvests.<sup>46</sup> Donor supported non-governmental organizations attempted to fill this gap by reorganizing local communal practices for delivering developmental goods such as agricultural inputs and training. Since the 1990s, in Chipata, the regional capital of Zambia's Eastern Province, donor driven non-governmental organizations often have had more development resources than provincial government departments.

This chapter discusses how these development interventions were mediated and negotiated through pre-existing informal norms and practices of local *Ngoni*

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<sup>46</sup> The situation of the *Ngonis* was to some extent similar to the panhandle villages in the Okavango Delta where all the cattle were slaughtered in the mid-1990s due to the cattle lung disease. The destruction was traumatic, but also provided an opportunity to make a living from "wildlife" in the Delta. Government officials, local politicians, and safari operators were pushing for a community trust that would provide employment, meat, and transport. While the crises faced by these rural communities were similar, this chapter will illustrate how their predicament was different.

communities. In the sections below I illustrate the changing patterns of informal labor pooling practices and their historical and contemporary significance with regard to patterns of reciprocity and volunteerism. In particular, I describe the transformations in what has been called “the classic index of agrarian class formation—the commoditisation of labor” (Worby 1995, 2), to explain the challenges this poses for external development agents such as non-governmental organizations.

Along with individual wage labor *ganyu* piecework, there have also emerged new communal collective labor practices: *group ganyu* work parties and *kalimalima* which re-read ‘pre-capitalist’ norms of reciprocity and volunteerism. These hybrid neo-traditional, reciprocal labor arrangements provide the flexibility of “labor markets” while simultaneously functioning as mechanisms of social support. The chapter argues that transition from beer-work parties and *kalimalima* to individual wage labor *ganyu* thus should not be interpreted as a transition to ‘maximizing individual gains’ and the leveling of community norms of collective survival under the inexorable market logic of capitalism.

The chapter also situates the discussion about the transformation of labor arrangements and attempts at their redeployment for contemporary development, in the broader context of post colonial state building and consolidation in Zambia. A receding Zambian state contrasted with Botswana’s developmental state with minimal patrimonial tendencies, poses different challenges for regulating and guiding “bottom-up decentralized community approaches” and “market integration.”

The analysis on Zambia draws on oral history, in-depth interviews, and focus groups with Ngoni communities in Chipata District. The findings presented in this

chapter also rely on a survey of 112 Ngoni farmers in six villages: Kaluwa, Mashaba, Mashachanta, Lavu, Nthambusha, and Chanzala.<sup>47</sup> The sample includes 46.4 percent male and 53.6 percent female respondents. The mean age of respondents is 36.43 years (the descriptive analyses of the dataset are presented in Appendix 1).

### **Voluntarism, Reciprocity, and Social Control: Ngoni Festive Work Parties**

Among the Ngoni, in the plateau region of Zambia's Eastern Province, labor pooling (such as festive beer parties and reciprocity work groups) was historically the dominant mechanism for mobilizing labor.<sup>48</sup> Neighbors, friends and/or kin relations assembled to undertake specific tasks lasting anywhere from a few hours to several days. Through a "festive" beer party, households and lineages pooled labor for individual and collective activities including clearing and stumping, hoeing, harvesting of fields, thatching and building of houses, and managing local communal resources. The hosts expressed their appreciation by entertaining the participants by brewing beer and/or providing food. Participation in festive beer parties was not only to accomplish various tasks but also provided solidarity and a means whereby to share and celebrate.

In oral history interviews there was nostalgia about a moral economy in the past. Bartomelo Mphanza, one of the village elders, recalled:

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<sup>47</sup> These villages were among the original "target" villages for the adoption of agroforestry innovations by ICRAF and World Vision.

<sup>48</sup> In rural Africa, communal labor pooling practices have been a common strategy for a range of collective and individual activities (see for example, Erasmus 1956; Moore 1975; Netting 1989). Voluntary groups undertake various types of work from clearing, planting, weeding and harvesting in fields, to constructing and maintaining housing and acquiring firewood. In the Koyfar plateau, cooperative work groups or *mar muos*) festive beer parties of 20-50 households and smaller groups of 5-10 people (*wuk*) were the dominant form of labor arrangements (Netting 1989). Discussing the importance of cooperative labor practices, Michael Kevane (1994) illustrates how *nafir* work parties in the Sudan-Sahel were also preferred over individualized contract wage labor. Like *mar muos*, *wuk* and *gandu*, farmers in the Sudanese-Sahel organized themselves in collective reciprocity arrangements to undertake various tasks.

I had a big field, and would invite the whole village to come and help. As soon as my neighbors saw me preparing firewood for brewing the beer, the news spread like wildfire. Once the neighbors knew, by the end of the day everyone in the village knew that beer was being brewed.<sup>49</sup>

The pooling of labor arrangements was predicated upon extended social networks and dissolved differences between working for pleasure or for pecuniary gain. In *Nyanja*, the language spoken by the *Ngonis*, the word for remuneration from work parties is “reward” and not “payment.” In these cooperative work parties, kin and community members contributed in a spirit of mutual support, solidarity, and celebration.

We used to brew beer and after finishing the work, enjoyed the beer. It was possible that maize would also be given as a reward.<sup>50</sup>

Colonial historians have also cataloged the inclusive non-monetary communitarian ethic manifest in the practice of festive beer parties:

Weeding and clearing new ground are both activities that are carried out to some extent cooperatively, either on a mutual help basis...or more frequently in return for beer provided by the owner. On the day before the party, a few men and women come to the garden and do their share of the work in advance, in the belief that it is better not to have to work and drink the same day. The next day, the bulk of the party arrives at the garden, and the wife of the owner brings out a pot of beer from the village. When the first half of the garden has been finished, there is a pause, and the beer is drunk. On completion of the whole garden, the party returns to the village and drinking begins in earnest. *It is not necessary to have worked in the garden to be able to attend the subsequent drinking, and the well-mannered host will specifically set aside certain pots of beer for those who have not been to the garden* (Barnes 1948, 11) [italics my emphasis].

The rationale of labor pooling, rather than being geared toward maximizing economic efficiency, was shaped in part by norms of generalized non-specific reciprocity, solidarity, and celebrating. In the historical memories of Ngoni farmers, the

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<sup>49</sup> Oral history interview, Mishoro village, Zambia, November 25, 2001.

<sup>50</sup> Oral history interview, Kaluwa village, Zambia, November 15, 2001.

levels of solidarity, cooperation and “festivities” surrounding work parties are often idealized, thus giving the impression that rural Africans were egalitarian.

Ngoni agrarian practices have been governed within the classic beer-for-labor and cattle-for-women cycle.<sup>51</sup> Volunteerism, social solidarity and cooperation, as well as coercion were constituted through the circulation of and control over beer, cattle, and people. Beer and cattle exchanges entailed unequal relations between women and men, and Ngoni commoners and non-Ngoni persons conquered locals as well as royals (Auslander 1997; Barnes 1948). Men appropriated maize or millet, which was grown by women, and redistributed the beer for drinking and festive parties. Elders (senior men) often sponsored and obtained the labor of junior younger men (see for example, Pottier 1988). Those who were able to mobilize communal labor enhanced their prestige and displayed their power to the rest of the community. In this way, beer flowed up the social hierarchy, from women to men, and from indigenes to royals (Auslander 1997). Locally brewed fresh beer also lubricated social relations and everyday relationships by providing a means for resolving disputes and social tensions.

Labor pooling, central to the social organization of the Ngonis, thus included elements of community solidarity and generalized non-specific reciprocity, as well as a strategic dimension of investing in social relations. Inasmuch as labor pooling through festive beer parties derived its logic from horizontal social ties, through tribute labor it also served as a mechanism for accumulation and social control establishing and reproducing social hierarchies for the lineage heads and seniors. In the contemporary

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<sup>51</sup> Beer as a commodity is imbued with a rich set of meanings and a long history of consumption in socially significant contexts including communal labor, sacrifices to ancestors, weddings, naming ceremonies, and bride wealth (Colson 1988; especially Richards 1939, 15-20).



period both of these are idealized as “festive beer parties” and contain connotations of reciprocity rather than subordination.

The nature of labor practices and the mechanisms of control and mobilization underwent a transformation, particularly from the 1920s, as Ngoni communities became intertwined with colonialism. The British authority over Northern Rhodesia was increasingly exercised to extract copper for colonial markets. By the 1940s, areas that lay along the “line of rail” turned mainly to cash crop production for the urban market and experienced low rates of out-migration, while the rest of the region was viewed as “labor reserves.”

Colonial authorities created settlements and introduced newer techniques and methods to make agricultural practices more efficient. For colonial planners, cooperative festive work parties were viewed as wasteful and individual male wage labor was considered more efficient.<sup>52</sup> The assumption was that production would increase by reforming agricultural practices, which in turn would create a progressive peasantry relying on wage labor and capable of furthering colonial development goals.

It was not too long before colonial authorities in Fort Jameson exercised control over Ngoni areas.<sup>53</sup> But in the Ngoni villages, which were geographically closer to neighboring Nyasaland (or present day Malawi) than the “core” copper areas in the north,

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<sup>52</sup> In oral history interview, elderly farmers pointed out that prior to the 1930s, planting was carried out in mounds, which were smaller in certain areas.

<sup>53</sup> Cash crop production in Eastern Province was historically “less developed” in contrast to Southern and Central Provinces. Cash production started only in 1947 with the introduction of a Peasant Scheme and the Eastern Province Farming Improvement Scheme in 1952. These two schemes were the main engines of introducing large scale cash production. For most of the 1950s, the schemes were operative only in Chipata, Katete, and Petauke districts. According to the Department of Agriculture report of 1958, between 1947 and 1951 the number of peasant farmers producing cash crops increased from 21 to close to a 1000 farmers in the three districts (Momba 1982).

these changes were not easily accepted. Not everyone sold their crops; for many Ngonis, ensuring their own food supply that was embedded in the wider classic "beer-for-labor and cattle-for-women cycle" was more important than producing cash crops. Moore and Vaughan's (1994, 172) general discussion of the late colonial period in rural east and central Africa is illustrative for the Ngoni villages:

...the key to increased agricultural productivity and soil fertility lay in forging an attachment with the male farmer and a piece of land, encourage [sic] investment in permanent housing, and providing services to rural areas.<sup>54</sup>

Until the early twentieth century:

an ambitious African producer, even with the aid of a plough and colonial subsidies, could not afford to cut himself off from his wider kin group...for it was mostly on his kin that he relied for additional labor to grow tobacco or cotton....the neat lines of nuclear family housing took on the more familiar experience of an African village settlement with new huts erected next to brick houses and the 'colonial village' fragmented into what was essentially a set of lineage settlements (Vaughn 1998, 171).

Labor pooling practices had allowed not only the chiefs to gain tributary labor, but families, extended kin and neighbors were also able to help each other with various on-farm and off-farm practices such as cultivating fields, building and repairing houses, and building storage sheds.

*Ngoni* farmers recall that with growing socioeconomic differentiation, not all farmers were showing up for festive work parties or for tribute labor that was usually called by the customary authorities and lineage heads. *Ngoni* farmers found themselves torn between responsibilities toward their kin and maintaining their status within social networks, while simultaneously desiring better harvests especially of cash crops. Elders

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<sup>54</sup> In general the emerging peasantry attempted to escape colonial states, resisting their incorporation and consolidation into standard units such as *ujamaa* villages in Tanzania (Hyden 1980).

of Lavu reminisce about the increased monetization and decline in the mobilizational of these non-monetary exchanges:

After the harvest, people used to help each other. We used to construct and repair houses collectively. We used to slaughter an animal, brew beer, and/or boil maize and share with each other. But then money was introduced. Now we slaughter for sale. This is because if you ask someone to help you slaughter, people know that you have money. Therefore to help they ask for money. In the past helping in the fields and construction of a house was free, but now you have to pay to get help.<sup>55</sup>

As kin employers attempted to acquire their material needs within an increasingly monetized and commercialized environment, negotiations around labor relations revealed social contestation concerning community norms of support. In the Ngoni villages of Eastern Zambia, elderly farmers still recall the increased competition for work parties among the hosts. This had resulted from the introduction of hybrid varieties of crops and agricultural inputs such as fertilizer that made the timing of farm operations more precise.

By the mid-1950s, beer work parties were an “inefficient” method of getting work done. For example, among the Tonga in Gwembe, the southern province, Colson (1988, 31) notes that client workers considered several criteria before deciding whose work parties to join:

...they felt an obligation to turn up for work parties of close kin, especially women kin, whether or not the beer was good or plentiful. Some also considered how likely it was that the host would reciprocate, either by appearing in person or by sending someone from the household. But for many the decision to participate came down to the quality of beer!

With agrarian commercialization, many Ngoni farmers who were beginning to accumulate cash started “hiring” labor, for example for preparing fields, weeding, and harvesting. In the Ngoni villages, instead of expecting a “reward,” client employees

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<sup>55</sup> Oral history interview, elderly farmer, Lavu village, 06 December 2001.

started demanding a “payment.” This semantic shift was indicative of a broader change that culminated in the emergence of individual *ganyu* wage-like labor contracts.

Dependent family members who in the past were obliged to show up for work parties could excuse themselves and either pursue income opportunities outside the village or demand money from the person trying to organize the work party. Recruiting through social networks could no longer be taken for granted. The difficulty of relying on social networks to mobilize labor was predicated on a combination of factors, including changes in agricultural technology, the production of cash crops, and in some cases increased opportunities in the copper belt. The implications of these shifts are discussed further below.

#### ***Ganyu* Piecework: Individuation of Production Relations**

People see that your neighbor is growing cash crops, and thus will make a profit. So, if someone needs help these days, we expect to be paid and do not work unless this is the case.<sup>56</sup>

*Ganyu* is commonly used in Zambia and Malawi to describe a variety of short term labor activities undertaken by smallholder farmers. The practice usually entails work undertaken over a period of days or weeks, and remuneration is settled in cash or in kind (for example, maize, clothes, shoes, etc.). *Ganyu* work covers a range of activities. Farmers hire *ganyu* labor to prepare the fields for the next agricultural season for labor intensive tasks such as tree-cutting for field extension, clearing land, making ridges, and seeding. The demand of *ganyu* is highest during the time periods that include planting, weeding and harvesting. During the dry season, *ganyu* labor is used for moulding bricks, building houses and digging wells.

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<sup>56</sup> Cecilia Phiri, female-headed household, interview, Kaluwa village, Zambia, 30 November 2001.

Elders in Ngoni villagers remember individualized wage-like *ganyu* exchanges emerging during the 1950s to 1970s.<sup>57</sup> Framing the practice as being embedded within the Ngoni's moral economy, one of the farmers reminisced about fairness in *ganyu*: "If it happened that two people need *ganyu*, the person hiring used to look at who is in more need."<sup>58</sup> Employers of *ganyu* would factor in the impoverished circumstances of their neighbors and kin.

*Ganyu* patron employer: We know each other in the village...and know who all need *ganyu*. These are people who do not have their own fields. There are also those who want money at all times, for example, those who want to drink everyday. Then there are those who are poor and needy, and to help them we offer *ganyu*.

*Ganyu* kin client: If I wanted to do *ganyu*, I proposed a price. If the owner knows that I am a poor person, then he could agree. If the person is a friend, I could have also reduced my price because we are friends.

*Ganyu* contractual negotiations were shaped not only by forces of supply and demand but by their embeddedness in local informal norms of social obligation and networks. Belonging to a social network influenced whether or not one could acquire *ganyu* piece-work. The identities of different actors, their personal reputations, and their participation in social networks shaped the patterns of *ganyu* contracts.

Before calling for *ganyu*, kin employers made would approximate calculations and proposed a price within a range, expecting negotiation after the work had been accomplished. For farmers such as Charles Zulu, who frequently hired *ganyu*, respecting the norms of *ganyu* negotiations was very important:

If I have a task, I consider whether I can do it alone. If I need help, how much would I need? For 1 lima for example, how much should I spend? I look at my

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<sup>57</sup> This was also the time of 'surfeit' of copper; by the mid 1970s a decline of copper prices in the world markets severely affected the Zambian economy.

<sup>58</sup> Godfrey Miti, interview, Kaluwa Village, Zambia, December 02, 2001.

financial standing. We calculate and decide on the rate of pay, which we can divide into smaller portions for individuals to be paid. Then I look for *ganyu*. If I do not have enough money, I think about what else I can give...maize, chitenge cloth, clothes. The negotiation might happen after the work, when they might say that the task was too much and they money too little, and ask for more. The employer on the other hand, can complain that work was not satisfactory and can ask some of the work to be redone. Often we renegotiate the rate. *After all, ganyu is done by relatives and neighbors* [italics, my emphasis].

By providing *ganyu*, patrons were being supportive of kin and neighbors whose harvests were not sufficient or who had fallen on difficult times. *Ganyu* functioned as an insurance mechanism for the marginal to survive within a rapidly monetized economy, and nested in personalized social networks it also masked and legitimated elite control and social differentiation.

#### **Dis-embedding of *Ganyu*: Impersonalization and Marginalization**

Life has changed. In the past we knew what it means to be a relative. These days even relatives can't help....

*Ganyu* these days comes with the rise of poverty. If someone is in need, they do *ganyu* and so get money for food. Payments can be anything—money, groundnuts, maize, clothes<sup>59</sup>

Throughout the 1970s, declining copper prices coupled with government inefficiencies deepened the poverty of rural farmers in Eastern Zambia. By the mid-1980s many farmers were unable to regularly acquire agricultural inputs, credit, or have a reliable source for marketing. Initially, the conflict around negotiations of individual *ganyu* piece-work contracts increased. Both patron employers and kin employees point out that it did not matter if someone was a neighbor or relative. Employers frequently considered efficiency and reliability in “work performance” when hiring someone for *ganyu*. One “progressive” wealthier farmer, who survived the hike in input prices and

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<sup>59</sup> Local farmer interview, Kaluwa Village, Zambia, October 26, 2001.

withdrawal of subsidies, remembers building a shop for which he had hired several people to do *ganyu*:

I hire *ganyu* so work can be done quicker and faster. [To hire *ganyu*] first and foremost, you have to know the reputation of the person performing the work. I would not hire people who were given payments previously and had abandoned their work...or, if they are known to take too long and are too slow.<sup>60</sup>

Patron employees were soon reneging on their responsibilities toward their kin and acting more like “employers” than patrons. Social relationships and obligations were increasingly ignored as important aspects for hiring *ganyu*:

If it is a relative...in fact, I cannot help all relatives. People understand that work has to be done properly otherwise the person will not be rehired. I demand that the work be done properly and on time. It is critical to get a good harvest, and for me to make a profit.<sup>61</sup>

In the Ngoni villages, the increase in the individuation of production relations and the scaling down of nodes of reciprocity and solidarity was coupled with increased social differentiation, but overall there was little capital accumulation. In the 1990s, the economic conditions further deteriorated.<sup>62</sup>

### ***Ganyu*: From a Coping Strategy to a Livelihood Strategy**

*Ganyu* gives money. If somebody came and offered piece-work, any person would abandon whatever he is doing and go and do *ganyu*.

In the past people used to work together—as a family—until the work was finished. These days everyone is on their own—*piaye yekha*. To get help, you have to pay.

Life has changed. In the past we knew what it means to be a relative. These days even relatives don't help.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>60</sup> Michael Mphanza, Mashaba Village, Zambia, October 15, 2001.

<sup>61</sup> Alexander Tembo, interview, Kaluwa Village, Zambia, October 05, 2001.

<sup>62</sup> In the summer of 1987 there were food riots in Lusaka, the capital of Zambia. With rising inflation, which was linked to declining copper prices and the impact of World Bank/IMF conditionalities, the cost of *mealie meal*, the staple food of most Zambians, sky rocketed.

<sup>63</sup> Focus Group interviews, interview, Ntambusha Village, Zambia, November 28, 2001.

Maize production was on a rising trend from the early 1980s until 1989. From 1990 onwards, however, production trends began to descend, with a sharp decline in 1992/93, a drought year for most of southern Africa. While some recovery was made after the drought, production has not regained its 1988-89 levels.<sup>64</sup>

In the late 1990s there was chronic food scarcity in the Ngoni villages, and few people wanted to hire *ganyu*. A common statement heard was: "*Ganyu* is difficult to find, they give big areas [to work] for low payments. The work is mostly hard, tiresome and the money given is less."<sup>65</sup> For both patron-employers and kin-employees, the meaning of *ganyu* has changed. Most people now associate *ganyu* with rising poverty and exclusion.

Three-fourths people of the village do *ganyu*, and only one-fourth hire *ganyu*. Poor people come to request for piece-work. If I have work, I can help them. But these days we do not care. Only those who do a good job and work hard...give a chance.

*Ganyu* is mostly done by those who are unable to meet their livelihood needs. Due to failed harvests, by the late 1990s, marginal farmers without access to agricultural inputs were more likely to become chronically dependent on *ganyu* wages.

Owing to relatively low yields, stored maize typically runs out every year for a substantial number of families for almost three months—November-February, forcing them to find *ganyu* labor. This is also the peak agricultural time period when critical tasks are needed on their own fields. To examine whether there was a relationship

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<sup>64</sup> In 2002 most southern African countries were facing severe declines in production. According to the World Food Program, Zambia had had a projected maize deficit of around 626,000 million tons until April 2003. The year's food production was 24 percent lower than the previous year's average production.

<sup>65</sup> Female headed household interview, Kaluwa Village, Zambia, December 02, 2001.



between wealth and doing individual *ganyu* wage labor, I constructed an index of wealth.<sup>66</sup>

In Table 4-1 below, men, those who are less wealthy and with small fields ( $p \leq .25$ ) and without formal education ( $p \leq .15$ ) are more likely to do *ganyu*.<sup>67</sup> The negative estimate on wealth and formal education signifies that those without wealth or formal education are more likely to do *ganyu*.

Table 4-1 Multivariate regression on who does *ganyu* wage labor

Parameter	Estimate	Standard Error	Chi-Square	Pr > ChiSq
Wealth	-0.0957	0.0728	1.73	0.1886 *
Age	0.0023	0.0039	0.36	0.5459
Men	0.1734	0.1004	2.98	0.0842***
Have a <i>Dimba</i> (garden)	0.0741	0.1597	0.22	0.6427
Household Head	-0.0002	0.1142	0.00	0.9983
Cattle	-0.0078	0.0091	0.74	0.3907
Field size	-0.0609	0.0455	1.79	0.1811 *
Formal Education	-0.0253	0.0164	2.38	0.1229 **
Village	0.1172	0.0979	1.43	0.2314*

\*\*\*\* Significant at  $\leq 0.01$ ; \*\*\*\* significant at the  $\leq 0.05$ ; \*\*\* significant at the  $\leq 0.10$ ; \*\* significant at  $\leq 0.15$ ; and \* significant at  $\leq 0.25$ . (N= 79)

In addition, the Table also illustrates that the variables of age, *dimba*, and household head are insignificant.<sup>68</sup> The findings were not significant to support the

<sup>66</sup> The wealth index was calculated by adding the variables measuring whether a person owned a bicycle, an ox-cart, and/or an iron roof.

<sup>67</sup> In Table 4-1, of the total 112 observations, 79 observations were used because there were 33 observations with missing values for some of the variables. Thirty respondents in the sample did *ganyu*.

<sup>68</sup> Wealth and cattle may be insignificant due to their multicollinearity for field size, which is often a proxy for wealth. However, if men and women have equal field size, then men are more likely than women to do *ganyu*. Since female headed households tend to have smaller field sizes (see descriptive statistics), it is not unlikely that they also rely on *ganyu*.

causal observation that female headed households, widows, single mothers, and orphans were more likely to do *ganyu*.<sup>69</sup>

*Ganyu* contracts are performed on a task basis with low remuneration. According to several farmers who did *ganyu*, cash earned from *ganyu* is usually used to buy food or for emergency expenses. For poorer households to survive, often their only recourse was to sell their labor power through demanding wage contracts. "Those who are not able to fend for themselves, whether the harvest is good or bad, and have to do piece-work," a comment George Mphanza, one of the lead farmers, is now commonly acknowledged as the fate of the emerging underclass in the Ngoni villages.

With continuing decline in harvests and heightened uncertainty from year-to-year, marginal households currently have to rely primarily on *ganyu*. For these marginal families who were caught in an unstable monetized economy with limited resources, *ganyu* was increasingly becoming more than a short-term seasonal coping strategy.

Table 4-2 Multivariate regression model on who hires *ganyu* wage labor

Parameter	Estimate	Standard Error	Chi-Square	Pr > ChiSq
Wealth	0.1923	0.0739	6.77	0.0093*****
Age	-0.0066	0.0039	2.85	0.0916***
Men	-0.0901	0.1019	0.78	0.3764
Have a <i>Dimba</i> (garden)	0.0882	0.1621	0.30	0.5866
Household Head	0.0987	0.1159	0.73	0.3945
Cattle	-0.0148	0.0093	2.55	0.1102**
Field size	0.1661	0.0462	12.92	0.0003*****
Formal Education	0.0113	0.0166	0.47	0.4949
Village	-0.0375	0.0994	0.14	0.7060

<sup>69</sup> There was a preponderance of respondents from two of the six villages in the dataset thus raising methodological concerns with categorical analysis. The dataset did not have a sufficient sample size to extrapolate the relationship between villages. Since no theoretical claims are being at the inter-village level, a variable *vill2* was created to combining respondents from Kaluwa and Mashaba and then compared with the other four villages (as village 2). This allowed for two groups of almost equal number which was necessary for undertaking the statistical tests.

\*\*\*\*\* Significant at  $\leq 0.01$ ; \*\*\*\* significant at the  $\leq 0.05$ ; \*\*\* significant at the  $\leq 0.10$ ; \*\* significant at  $\leq 0.15$ ; and \* significant at  $\leq 0.25$ . (N= 79)

The results in Table 4-2 illustrates that farmers who are wealthier ( $p \leq .01$ ), are younger ( $p \leq .05$ ), and have larger fields ( $p \leq .01$ ), are more likely to hire *ganyu*. The negative coefficients illustrate that older respondents measured through the age variable ( $p \leq .10$ ) and those who have cattle ( $p \leq .15$ ) are less likely to hire *ganyu*. Education, gender, and whether a person has a *dimba* do not have a significant effect on explaining whether a person is more likely to hire *ganyu*.<sup>70</sup> These results confirm the findings of the ethnographic fieldwork and qualitative interviews that the people who tend to hire *ganyu* are wealthier.

### Neo-Traditional Labor Arrangements

The above regression analysis suggests that labor practices during the 20<sup>th</sup> century became individualized and impersonalized. Individuation in production relations and increasing social differentiation, however, has also provided the conditions for the emergence of new reciprocal labor arrangements. These newer nodes of reciprocity, social solidarity and collective action among the Ngonis are centered not on lineage and other customary institutions, but established through relationships which simultaneously involve (strategically) investing in social relationships and cultivating new shared expectations of reciprocity. Along with mutual labor agreements and work-sharing based on kinship and affinity ties, these new solidarities have opened up spaces specifically for

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<sup>70</sup> One might assume that there is a relationship between “owning a *dimba*” and “wealth” but in the sample most of the respondents owned *dimbas*, and hence this variable did not provide any variation for calculating a wealth index. The relevance of a *dimba* and access to income is discussed further below in the section “Multiple Trajectories of Labor Arrangements” and in Appendix B.

women who cultivate common interests, friendships and acquaintances with each other and wealthier families.

### ***Kalimalima***

Along with festive work parties and individual *ganyu* contracts, Ngoni communities have also relied on mutually reciprocated labor where the reliability of the labor arrangement is derived based on particularistic, affective, face-to-face criteria. These labor arrangements are often long-term, lasting a number of seasons.

It is not uncommon these days in the Ngoni villages to find groups ranging from five to fifteen people organizing for social and economic tasks. These groups take different forms, sometimes organizing within lineages and extended families, at other times among neighbors and friends transcending customary boundaries of kinship institutions around which communal and collective life was historically organized.

As life changed, people stopped brewing beer and started working on their own. Nowadays a person wants to be self reliant—*kazipalili*. They thought that it's better to join hands—which is why *kalimalima* came about.<sup>71</sup>

There are several local meanings that came together to comprise the term *kalimalima*. The practice is associated with the historic shifting cultivation practices. *Kulima* means doing (verb) and the action of ploughing. *Kalima* is a noun and the term for cultivation. *Lima* means ploughing, *Kulima*, hence *kalimalima*. In *kalimalima*, people worked together in each other's fields during the planting season, and during the dry season, for example, in fixing houses and/or cutting thatch. One of the Ngoni farmers described the process:

Initially we started the work in the oldest member's fields, and then agreed to go somewhere else. We respect our elders, hence we follow age. The youngest used

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<sup>71</sup> Elder female, Mishoro village, November 15, 2001.

to complain, but we ensured that we spent a day in each field. The frequency of *kalimalima* increased during the planting season since there are different activities: clearing the fields, making lines, planting, weeding, and eventually harvesting and even transporting to the shed.

Another form of labor pooling or group work is *chibili/chibele* where families, a group of friends, or neighbors (usually two to five people) decide to work together and help each other. There was some discussion as to whether these contracts were between individuals or families and commonly it was individuals who made an informal agreement selecting a time (often afternoons) to work in each other's fields. In the morning, most farmers work on their fields and during the afternoon they congregate to help each other. These reciprocity arrangements were mostly deployed for labor intensive tasks such as weeding during the rainy season.

### **Group Ganyu**

In *group ganyu* five to fifteen people work collectively in either on-farm or off-farm activities. During the rainy season *group ganyu* is most commonly done for field extension, clearing, ploughing, planting, weeding, and/or harvesting. During the dry season, *group ganyu* is used for constructing houses or pit latrines, ploughing and working on the *dimbas*.<sup>72</sup> *Group ganyu* is voluntary and participants are not necessarily kin or belong to the same lineage, but can also be based on extra-family relations including friendship or acquaintances.

As seen in Figure 4-1 below, *Group Ganyu* is popular in all six villages, but there is a 20 percent difference between the clusters of villages, with village two (see footnote

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<sup>72</sup> These days, *dimbas* are often a reliable source to acquire cash throughout the year. The ability to have a garden and be able to sell vegetables to the local market in Chipata is one of the few ways that farmers can survive and begin to accumulate wealth. "The wealthy have good *dimbas* (vegetable gardens), are good farmers, and have a good harvest, send their children to school, and eat well."

below) having a larger percentage of the population participating in *group ganyu*.

*Kalimalima* is the second most popular labor arrangement in both groups.

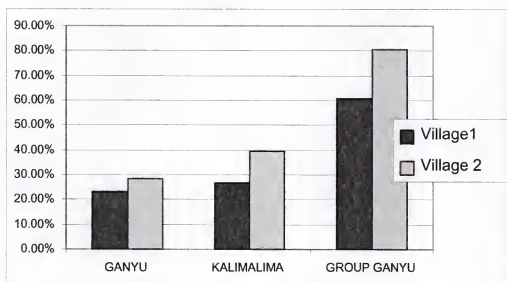


Figure 4-1 Comparing labor arrangements across villages

Most people identify *group ganyu* with a practice that emerged within the last decade. These work parties became affordable after people started planting vegetables in *dimbas* and were able to generate cash income. "It all started with those who had a bigger field or *dimba*—they would approach groups to do *ganyu*," said Everesto Zulu an elder in Kaluwa village.

Table 4-3 Multivariate regression model on who does *group ganyu*

Parameter	Estimate	Standard Error	Chi-Square	Pr > ChiSq
Wealth	-0.0781	0.0747	1.09	0.2958
Age	-0.0037	0.0041	0.83	0.3615
Men	-0.0994	0.1038	0.92	0.3382
Have a Dimba (garden)	0.1392	0.1654	0.71	0.4000
Household Head	-0.1545	0.1180	1.71	0.1904*
Cattle	0.0128	0.0094	1.85	0.1742*
Fieldsize	-0.0003	0.0468	0.00	0.9951
Formal Education	-0.0265	0.0168	2.49	0.1146**
Vill12	0.2140	0.1076	3.96	0.0466****

\*\*\*\* Significant at  $\leq 0.01$ ; \*\*\* significant at the  $\leq 0.05$ ; \*\* significant at the  $\leq 0.10$ ; \* significant at  $\leq 0.15$ ; and \* significant at  $\leq 0.25$ . (N= 79)

The statistical results of Table 4-3 show that the village variable is highly significant ( $p > .05$ ), followed by formal education, which had a negative coefficient ( $p > .15$ ). Other variables (whether the farmer was a member of a club, whether he or she had cattle or was a household head) were barely significant at the ( $p > .25$ ) level. In these results, wealth, field size, gender, age, and presence of a *dimba* were not significant. This may be because the majority of the respondents (between 66 percent and 80 percent) did *group ganyu*, hence there is not much variation in the sample.

Based on the ethnographic interviews it became clear that the circumstances of participating in *group ganyu* often differ from *individual ganyu*. *Group ganyu* involves not only monetary gain, but also a voluntary sacrifice toward a collective benefit. Typically, *group ganyu* is done to contribute toward a communal good as well as to meet a household's consumption or production goals. *Group ganyu* also has a developmental function since it was undertaken to mobilize funds and resources for local developmental activities. When *group ganyu* is done with the purpose of raising funds for a communal project, the group decides on a rate of payment since it is often done to meet specific needs. In *individual ganyu*, more often than not, the employer who mostly decided the payment for the work performed.

*Group ganyu* is similar to the logic of work parties, and simultaneously *also* relies on the market-orientation of individual *ganyu* wage labor. Members of churches, football clubs, and women's sewing clubs do *group ganyu*, for example, to fundraise for their coffers. The Catholic Church in Kaluwa village had several committees each with their own accounts.

When we need something for the church, we ask the chair lady to look for *group ganyu*. Or when we hear that someone is offering a job we send the chair lady to go and evaluate. Last month we ploughed in George Mphanza's field. We wanted to raise money for transport and food for an outreach program to Musepaza.<sup>73</sup>

For the employers, *group ganyu* provides an efficient and cost effective source of labor. For example, one farmer who had mobilized labor through *group ganyu* said: "I hired *group ganyu* because I wanted to finish ploughing the field before the rains arrived."<sup>74</sup> However, efficiency is not the only criterion which makes *group ganyu* a favored strategy for mobilizing labor, especially for rich farmers. *Group ganyu* is also a mechanism for redistributing and contributing to community activities. Many *group ganyu* employers pointed out that they felt an obligation to contribute toward the development of the village.

For the poorer client employees, the transfer of money or other material goods through *group ganyu* is a survival mechanism. Although those who participate in *group ganyu* may make less money by working as a group, by working as such they gain greater bargaining power over the terms of the agreement. It also allows them to find more opportunities, especially during the peak rainy season when there is greater demand for labor.

The identities of those involved in *group ganyu* are thus not only as wage laborers, but also members of a collectivity. Rich patron employers and impoverished client employees bargain over the terms of labor contracts, but in so doing they are also attempting to recreate an ethos of local community solidarity. It is in these negotiated contracts that we find the functional equivalent of labor market flexibility and efficiency,

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<sup>73</sup> Elizabeth Mphanza, interview Mashaba village, November 05, 2001.

<sup>74</sup> Alexander Tembo, interview Kaluwa village, November 06, 2001.



along with a struggle to maintain social support and horizontal bonds of a network orientation which mitigate labor exploitation and alienation.

### **Multiple Trajectories of Labor Arrangements**

Within the last decade, many farmers in the six Ngoni villages have started growing vegetables on their *dimbas* for the weekly market in Chipata. Vegetable production currently is often a more reliable source of cash than cash crops, especially maize. Farmers sell their produce, either at the local market in Chipata, to Shoprite (a local retail store) or to buyers from Malawi. On Wednesdays and Saturdays, on the Great East Road that connects the Eastern Province to the rest of the country, there is a steady stream of farmers who take their produce on bicycles. The weekly market in Chipata has also become an important source of cash for farmers who have *dimbas*.<sup>75</sup> In the Ngoni villages it was increasingly common for farmers to take some of their produce on certain days across to Malawi, 20 kilometers away. There were also individual businessmen who were seen around the villages looking for cheap bargains. With increased commercialization, one could expect that individual wage labor to be the modal labor arrangement.

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<sup>75</sup> Cash crops, especially maize surplus, are sold to Asian traders in Chipata. Predominantly two traders, Shifa and Daya, make the bulk of the purchases. Many farmers had also begun to sell their produce in Mchinji, the neighboring town across the border in Malawi, since they have plant later in the season. There are two big market days, in Chipata. On Wednesdays and Saturdays, farmers from villages come to sell their goods. Typically, the prices are lowest in the early morning, since farmers expect to sell all their produce by the afternoon, after which they go and buy necessities for their homes. Saturdays are considered to be cheaper than Wednesdays. Most sellers who come from the villages sell their goods until 1:00 pm in the afternoon after which they go buy other things and then return home

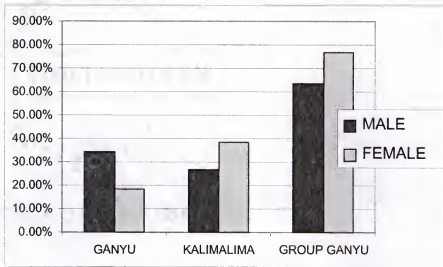


Figure 4-2 Comparing male and female labor arrangements

Comparing the dominant labor arrangements practiced in the Ngoni villages, however, suggested surprising results. In Figure 4-2 above we see that instead of *individual ganyu* serving as the most common labor arrangement, both male and female respondents identified *group ganyu* work parties as constituting the dominant labor exchange contracts. Over 76 percent women and 63 percent men had undertaken *group ganyu*. Thirty eight percent of the women and 26 percent of the men had participated in *kalimalima* reciprocal work arrangements, and only 34 percent of the men and only 18 percent of the women had done *individual ganyu*.

This brings us to important questions: What do we learn about processes of agrarian transformation through changing labor arrangements over the last century? And furthermore, what do changing labor practices tell us about the effects on different social groups, especially after the implementation of structural adjustment policies? The short answer is that this story is *not only* about the sale and purchase of labor. Pre-capitalist structures persist, thus presenting a fundamental disarticulation in the process of penetration and wholesale replacement of these practices.

In delving a bit deeper we see that individualized and contractual wage-like labor relations gained ascendance. Individualism in social relationships was much more recognized, thereby suggesting that the moral economy of Ngoni farmers had declined. It is not surprising that community-level, generalized reciprocity relations have begun disintegrating due to chronic food insecurity in the early 1990s. The transition from beer-work parties to individual *ganyu* suggests that that labor practices have become individualized and impersonalized.

As the Table 4-4 below however outlines, there are multiple trajectories of labor arrangements and mobilization which allow us to reject the broader claim that there is one, ideal, unitary path for the “evolution” of capitalism. African social formations articulate with imposed western capitalist modes of production in a variety of ways.

#### **Post-Structural Adjustment Local-Level Associational Life**

Neoliberal structural adjustment policies mandated by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank in the 1980s radically transformed the rules and responsibilities of agricultural production and marketing between states, markets, and communities. Following their implementation in Zambia, the input distribution system was privatized and state run cooperatives and marketing boards were closed. The “shock-therapy” of structural adjustment provided a shock, but little therapy. Studies since the early 1990s show that fertilizer- and credit-subsidy removal and exchange rate liberalization has led to a sharp increase in the costs of farmers’ production inputs and thus were beyond the reach of a majority of farmers in the region (Gladwin 1992, 2002; Franzel et al. 2004).

Rising population density in the previous decades (which resulted in land pressure) had already interrupted traditional fallow practices.<sup>76</sup> Local farmers were increasingly unable to leave a portion of their land uncultivated. In response to this crisis, for over a decade researchers at the International Center for Agroforestry Research (ICRAF) tested, refined and introduced a new agricultural technique of improved fallows in Eastern Province. The term “improved” was used to signify a newer and more efficient, practice of fallow. By planting leguminous trees, which fix nitrogen along with their crops, farmers could potentially replenish the fertility of the soil, improve soil organic matter and biomass, and eventually increase yields. The quantities of nitrogen captured through improved fallows were similar to those found with fertilizer application.<sup>77</sup>

The challenge for ICRAF was to “scale up” adoption. Using the “diffusion of innovation” model that is often used for new agricultural technologies (Rogers 1963), the improved fallow technology was conceived as a natural progression, building and improving upon the traditional approaches to improve soil fertility (Kwesiga et al. 2003; Franzel et al. 2004). ICRAF relied on a number of trials that involved its researchers, government extension agents and local farmers whereby they examined the agronomic and financial viability of improved fallows systems. By 1996/97 over 3,000 farmers had begun planting one or more species of nitrogen fixing trees on their fields (Kwesiga et al. 2003, 24). This inspired a collaboration that resulted in the establishment of the Zambia Integrated Agroforestry Project (ZIAP), which was jointly supported by World Vision

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<sup>76</sup> Population density in the Province varies between 25 and 40 persons km<sup>2</sup>. About one-third of the farmers own oxen; most of the others cultivate by hand-hoe. Average cropped land ranges from 1.1-1.6 hectares for hoe cultivators, to 2.3-4.3 hectares for ox cultivators (Kwesiga et al. 2003, 5).

<sup>77</sup> According to Sanchez (2002), Africa has ample nitrogen in the air and phosphorus in many rock deposits; the challenge is to determine how small farmers can tap into these inexpensive natural resources instead of relying on costly fertilizers to return nutrients to depleted soil.

International and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). In the 2000/2001 season, ZIAP had reached 11,000 farmers in the Eastern Province who planted 14,356 fallows, from a total of 20,000 farmers in the province who had planted improved fallows (Kwesiga et al. 2003, 24).

### Who Adopts Improved Fallows?

A widespread adoption of improved fallows would contribute to the food security of Ngoni farmers. It was therefore important to identify who would be most likely to adopt this technology. In this sample of 112 farmers, 28 farmers adopted improved fallows. Table 4-5 below illustrates that those who have a *dimba* and do *kalimalima-in-clubs* are most likely to plant improved fallows ( $p \leq .05$  and  $p \leq .01$ , respectively). Wealth also has an independent effect on the likelihood of people planting improved fallows ( $p \leq .10$ ). Those who adopt are wealthier, have a *dimba* (and can therefore plant vegetables to sell in the local markets) ( $p \leq .05$ ), are able to hire *ganyu* ( $p \leq .10$ ) and are likely to be heads of their households ( $p \leq .15$ ). They also do *kalimalima-in-clubs* ( $p \leq .01$ ), and tend to live in Mashaba and Kaluwa ( $p \leq .01$ ), the two villages which ICRAF and ZIAP, respectively, targeted for implementing the improved fallows systems.

These findings confirm those by researchers at ICRAF and ZIAP who also found that there was an association between wealth level and planting improved fallows (Log linear model,  $p \leq .10$ ). As wealth status declined, the proportion of farmers planting improved fallows also declined (Kwesiga et al. 2003).<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> The analyses undertaken by researchers at ICRAF and the ZIAP also evaluated a range of factors that influenced the adoption of improved fallows: technological characteristics, household characteristics, community level factors, access to information, local institutional arrangements and macro policies (Franzel et al 2003; Kwesiga et al. 2003). My research complements previous research by focusing primarily on the relationship between formal and informal institutions to show how these affected the adoption and scaling-up the IF technology.

Table 4-5 Multivariate regression model on who currently has improved fallows

Parameter	Estimate	Standard Error	Chi-Square	Pr > ChiSq
Wealth	0.1372	0.0772	3.15	0.0758 ***
Age	0.0012	0.0041	0.08	0.7741
Men	0.1007	0.1156	0.76	0.3835
Have a Dimba	0.3823	0.1866	4.20	0.0405****
Household	0.1803	0.1151	2.45	0.1174 **
Head				
Cattle	-0.0079	0.0098	0.65	0.4197
Do Kalimalima	0.0946	0.1026	0.85	0.3566
Do Ganyu	-0.1577	0.1265	1.55	0.2124
Do Kalima-in-clubs	0.4342	0.1578	7.57	0.0059*****
Hire Ganyu	-0.2210	0.1219	3.29	0.0699***
Village	0.3228	0.0996	10.51	0.0012*****

\*\*\*\*\* Significant at  $\leq 0.01$ ; \*\*\*\* significant at the  $\leq 0.05$ ; \*\*\* significant at the  $\leq 0.10$ ; \*\* significant at  $\leq 0.15$ ; and \* significant at  $\leq 0.25$ . (N= 79)

One of the findings of baseline research was that clubs and farmer-groups affected the adoption of improved fallows (Peterson et al. 1999). Toward this end, ZIAP's "extension" approach was to identify farmers who were interested and could organize themselves. The ZIAP project identified local level groups that depended on a voluntary contribution of labor as a primary mechanism for encouraging adoption. Given the common view that development projects in the past were "hand-outs" to the local communities, at the behest of international donors, ZIAP downplayed financial or material benefits that farmers would receive by participating in the program. While farmers would receive direct benefits in the form of training in the agricultural technology proposed, and possibly help with marketing and potential credit, the benefits of improved soil fertility from adopting improved fallows would only be accrued in future years.<sup>79</sup>

<sup>79</sup> Other local NGOs in the area and commercial companies, who were focused on encouraging the production of cash crops, however, used contracts with 'emerging' farmers who were provided material incentives.

My analysis confirms the findings of the baseline research, which pointed out that clubs and farmer-groups affected the adoption of IF. People who belonged to clubs tended to adopt improved fallow technologies more than those who did not belong to clubs. The findings presented here provide a partial confirmation of the strategy of international donor and non-governmental organizations, but also illustrate how informal institutions influence the prospects for development in both positive and negative ways.

In examining membership in local clubs and groups, the survey results indicate that heads of households are more likely to participate in clubs. Of those who are members of local level organizations, 70 percent are heads of household and more women (59.5 percent) than men (40.5 percent) participate in local groups and clubs.

A 'lead farmer' responsible for managing a local group that was implementing the improved fallows technology explained why it is the case that people who belong to clubs tended to adopt the improved fallow technologies more than non-club farmers:

"Whatever development activity comes, we participate. It is not for all farmers, but for clubs. It is people in clubs who test new technologies and others follow."<sup>80</sup> A member of a farmer group in the Ngoni villages also pointed out: "NGOs want to help people who are well organized. Since we have had the farmer's club, and cooperate, they work with us."<sup>81</sup> Since the 1990s, after the collapse of "top-down" state-led cooperatives, both state and non-governmental organizations have attempted participatory approaches that target "groups" rather than individuals since this has been deemed more cost efficient. Thus, it should not be surprising that those who adopt improved fallows are most likely to be

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<sup>80</sup> George Mphanza, interview, Mashaba village, November 25, 2001

<sup>81</sup> Michael Mphanza, interview, Mashaba village, November 26, 2001

members of clubs and farmer groups. This to some extent confirms the efficacy of “bottom-up” participatory development approaches.

Baseline studies and subsequent implementation also pointed out that labor was one of the key “constraints” for adopting and scaling up of improved fallows (Peterson et al. 1999; Haggblade et al. 2004). I soon discovered that participation in local clubs and farmer groups was inextricably related to the process of mobilizing labor. Clubs and groups relied on the voluntary labor of their members to undertake various activities. The findings in the previous chapter indicated that the evolution of labor arrangements in Eastern Province did not evolve as colonial planners and the early post-colonial state had envisaged. “Traditional” reciprocity labor pooling arrangements have continued to co-exist with individualized labor practices. But how does this fully explain the adoption and scaling up of improved fallows technology?

#### **Neo-Traditional Labor Practices: *Kalimalima-in clubs and Neo-Kalimalima***

Post-colonial states and other external actors, in order to develop rural localities, have often tried to mobilize and tap into local solidarity networks such as *kalimalima* because these practices entail a voluntary “mutual” contribution of labor. State agents and development agencies thus have attempted to use *kalimalima* and festive labor practices to induce participation for development activities. In the Ngoni villages, one version of *kalimalima* is associated with labor intensive public works, which was introduced during drought years. An elder from Mashaba village pointed out:

The Ministry of Agriculture was the one who introduced this practice. There was a famine/drought and the government brought relief. They organized us together into small groups. They provided us with maize to maintain the roads and clean adjoining areas. During that time *kalimalima* was done by the whole village.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Elestina Phiri, single mother, interview, Kaluwa village, 11 September 2001.



Farmer groups and clubs that have tested the improved fallows technology also deploy the imagery and logic of classical *kalimalima* for learning new agricultural techniques and building infrastructure such as seed banks for the clubs. Highlighting the benefits of *kalimalima*, a club member stated:

The very practice of *kalimalima* has been re-introduced in clubs. When people work as a club, they are doing a form of *kalimalima*. In the past we used to work as families. We used to start in my field because I am the oldest, and then move to the next older one, 'til we finished the tasks. We help each other in clearing our fields, at the time of weeding and during harvesting. These days we do these activities as a club.<sup>83</sup>

"Lead farmers" use *kalimalima* to legitimate the functioning of new organizational structures. Michael Mphanza, an office holder of the farmer's group in Mashaba village, pointed out:

In the past we used to work in each other's fields. Even in the building of houses, the whole village would come and help build a house until it was finished. But as time went on, we helped each other less. As people became well-to-do, they could buy their own tools, hire ox-carts to transport their harvest. But now when these ideas of clubs have come, that practice [*kalimalima*] has been revived.<sup>84</sup>

The chairperson of the Kamila, a farmers club, also reflected on the positive benefits of *kalimalima*:

Every month we meet and come up with a plan. This month we will be making a nursery. We will take different rows, some will plant, others will water, and others will weed...everybody participates somehow. This is a group project. We will make contour ridges in each other's fields.<sup>85</sup>

Another club member highlighted how *kalimalima-in-clubs* takes place through "mobile courses" where farmers learn new agricultural techniques:

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<sup>83</sup> Andrew Chulu, interview, Mashaba village, 15 September 2001.

<sup>84</sup> Michael Mphanza, interview, Mashaba village, 15 September 2001.

<sup>85</sup> Mike Zulu, interview, Kaluwa village, 17 September 2001.

We use *kalimalima* to teach each other. After learning the technique, we do it collectively from one field to another. A "modern" form of practice called potholing was introduced through clubs. We then went to implement them in the fields. We formed groups of about ten, depending on proximity to the fields.<sup>86</sup>

Table 4-6 below provides some additional insights on who participates in

*kalimalima-in-clubs*. Those who are wealthier ( $p \leq 0.15$ ) are less likely to undertake

*kalimalima-in-clubs*. This is to be expected since wealthier farmers can hire *ganyu*.

Holding constant the variable of wealth, women are more likely than men to participate in *kalimalima-in-clubs* ( $p \leq 0.10$ ).

Table 4-6 Multivariate regression model on who does *kalimalima-in-clubs*

Parameter	Estimate	Standard Error	Chi-Square	Pr > ChiSq
Wealth	-0.1022	0.0641	2.54	0.1110**
Age	-0.0011	0.0037	0.09	0.7697
Men	-0.1690	0.0981	2.97	0.0849***
Have a Dimba (garden)	0.1600	0.1748	0.84	0.3598
Household Head	0.0813	0.1014	0.64	0.4229
Cattle	-0.0083	0.0075	1.21	0.2710
Fieldsize	-0.0104	0.0412	0.06	0.8009
Formal Education	0.0040	0.0150	0.07	0.7894
Village	0.0321	0.0906	0.13	0.7229

\*\*\*\* Significant at  $\leq 0.01$ ; \*\*\*\* significant at the  $\leq 0.05$ ; \*\*\* significant at the  $\leq 0.10$ ; \*\* significant at  $\leq 0.15$ ; and \* significant at  $\leq 0.25$ . (N= 79)

Clubs, farmer groups, and other local level organizations thus attempt to tap into and harness the mutual reciprocity and support logic of historic practices—*kalimalima* and festive beer parties. In effect, it is hoped that by relying on the solidarity networks evident in *kalimalima*, labor can be mobilized for developmental activities such as adoption of improved fallows. However, as the previous chapter indicated, *kalimalima* may have less mobilizational potential than *group ganyu*. Compared to *group ganyu*, fewer people participate in *kalimalima-in-clubs*. Only 13 percent of the respondents from

<sup>86</sup> Cecilia Phiri, interview, Kaluwa village, 19 September 2001.

a sample of 112 participated in *kalimalima-in-clubs*, compared with close to 70 percent who did *group ganyu*.

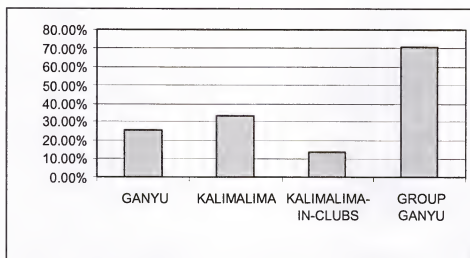


Figure 4-3: Comparing Labor Arrangements

“ICRAF never brought enough seed and there was favoritism in the distribution of seeds. They were not serious, and only demonstrated at George’s field.”<sup>87</sup>

A common perception among non-governmental organizations was that farmers did not get involved in development activities (such as participating in local farmer groups, attending meetings, and following the agronomic guidelines, cropping and payment schedules) because they were apathetic, lazy, drunkards, and not interested in “developing” themselves. Many local farmers and external actors also argued that there was favoritism by the leaders of clubs and groups. Often, local farmers mentioned that they would not adopt improved fallows because they were not interested. Many of these perceptions about local communities were misplaced, especially by external development actors.

After identifying, through in-depth interviews and focus groups, the key reasons for participating in local groups and clubs, I included a ranking exercise in the survey

<sup>87</sup> Victorial Mphanza, single mother, interview, Mashaba village, 15 September 2001.

questionnaire. Local farmers responded to the following statements below on an ascending scale of 1-6, where 1=strongly agree and 6=strongly disagree. The percentage scores were then tabulated in a graph. The ranking analysis produced several interesting, and somewhat surprising results.

Table 4-7: Reasons for participating in groups and clubs

Variable Name	Variable Description
Lack Interest	People do not participate because they lack interest.
Favoritism	People do not participate in groups or clubs because leaders favor their relatives and friends.
Lazy	In general, people do not participate in groups or clubs because they are lazy and drunkards.
Too Busy	People do not join groups or clubs because they are too busy (too much work) with their own activities.
Time Waste	People do not join groups because they think that groups or clubs are a waste of time.
Leadership	People are reluctant to join groups and clubs, because their leadership is controlled by a few families.

In Figure 4-4 below, the most common reason identified by over 45 percent of the respondents for not participating in clubs and groups was “lack of interest.” Another factor that was ranked most important by 20 percent of the farmers was favoritism by leaders toward their relatives and friends. Factors that ranked low, contrary to the findings in the qualitative interviews of who, included laziness and whether someone was a drunkard, and the common misperception that joining the clubs was a waste of their time. Somewhat surprisingly, the lowest rank belonged to the perception that local farmers did not participate in farmer groups and clubs because of the idea that their leadership was controlled by a few families, suggesting that customary elites and lineage heads were not necessarily the ones who dominated these clubs and local groups.

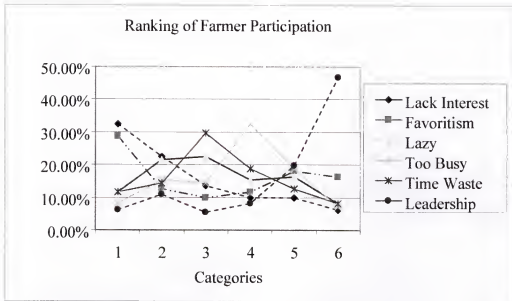


Figure 4-4 Ranking of farmer participation

The ranking exercise provides some insight into the reasoning behind why farmers were not participating in groups and clubs.

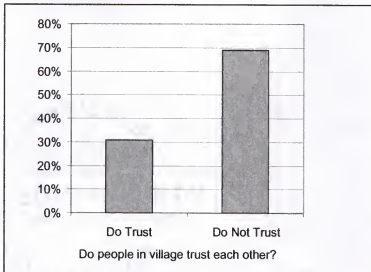


Figure 4-5 Levels of Trust

As Figure 4-5 above illustrates, in general, there has been a decline in levels of trust and scaling down of sharing and reciprocity of household items and other material things which people commonly use.

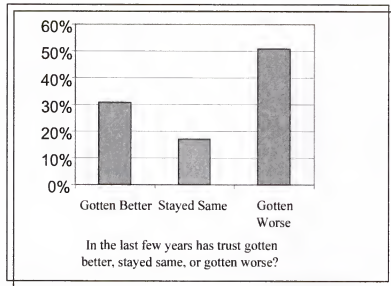


Figure 4-6 Changes in levels of trust

Overall, according to respondents, levels of trust have declined. As Table 4-6 above shows, 51 percent of respondents thought that levels of trust had gotten worse, compared to only 31 percent who said that levels of trust have gotten better. In most Ngoni villages one finds an emerging group of chronically poor households (with dilapidated houses that do not have fresh thatch), and wealthier households (with newer, cleaner and bigger houses with iron sheets), often on the outskirts of villages. Those who moved to the outskirts point out that it was to escape the demands of kin. It was not uncommon to hear individuals in families living on the outskirts of these villages say that they had to leave due to witchcraft and jealousy.

In the past the *vigavas* used to work together, but today they are almost independent. In the past friends used to be more helpful than relatives, but now it's each one on their own, with his family. People now live a life of isolation.<sup>88</sup>

People often lament the decline in reciprocity and solidarity among extended family. The communality of festive work parties is contrasted and compared to *kazipalile*

<sup>88</sup> Lozaliya Mbuzela, Nthambusha village, interview, November 11, 2001.

of the present (meaning to stand on your own, fend for yourself, help yourself, i.e.

“you’ve no mother or father or relatives” to help you).

These days everyone is preaching about it—*kazipalile*—fight your daily battles yourself. But you can only lead a good life when relatives and friends are cooperative and helpful.<sup>89</sup>

In particular, older women and men, and female headed households lament the decline in community reciprocity:

People see that your neighbor is growing cash crops, and thus will make a profit. So, if someone needs help these days, we expect to be paid and do not work unless this is the case.<sup>90</sup>

Table 4-4: Multiple trajectories of labor arrangements

Labor arrangements	Basis of Legitimation
Pre-colonial festive work parties and tribute labor	Investment in social networks to maintain & enhance community reciprocity; but nested in social networks, mechanism for domination and expropriate labor power
Classical <i>Kalimalima</i> (early) <i>Ganyu</i>	Balanced reciprocity/ mutual-aid
<i>Ganyu</i> wage labor in the 1990s	Balanced communal reciprocity with individual gain
<i>Kalimalima-in-clubs</i>	“Dis-embedded” market logic
<i>Group Ganyu</i>	Re-introduced from the “top” by development practitioners, and state, ▲ vilified, limited mobilizing potential
	Blends cooperative pre-capitalist labor pooling & market demand) emerged from “below” ▲ legitimate worthy of personal sacrifice, high mobilizing potential

Given these results, what could ZIAP do differently? Clearly, as Table 4-4 above illustrates it needs to take the cue from the “multiple trajectories” of commodification of labor in the Ngoni villages. If farmers are to continue to plant improved fallow plots, and experiment with new and different species of trees, they will need material incentives to do so. These incentives might be in a number of forms: new varieties of seeds, credit,

<sup>89</sup> Charity Malata, interview, Kaluwa village, 15 September 2001.

<sup>90</sup> Cecilia Phiri, female-headed household, interview, Kaluwa village, Zambia, 30 November 2001.

fertilizer, and/or new kinds of technical knowledge. But an equally if not more critical point is that while incentives are important (as the findings in Botswana in the case of CBNRM also suggest), more thought must be given as to how to combine material incentives with *legitimate patterns of labor mobilization*. An example of this can be seen in the emergence of *group ganyu*, which is a spontaneous and adaptive response to increasing the monetization and disruptions caused by structural adjustment. *Group ganyu*, I argue, successfully blends capitalist mechanisms and the logic of social relations of a pre-capitalist mode and may therefore hold the potential for achieving the often elusive goals of development.

### Conclusion

As illustrated in this chapter, in the pre-colonial and early colonial period, festive work parties and *kalimalima* were the modal forms of labor relations. The latter were characterized by horizontal norms of community reciprocity and social support. But over time, informal norms of community solidarity, fairness, and social support have become fragmented, first via colonialism and later during the post colonial period in attempts at agricultural intensification. Most recently, fragmentation has occurred following the structural adjustment-led state withdrawal. The “disembedding” of labor is evident in the commodification and individualization of labor arrangements. A further “disembedding” of labor practices can be evinced in the 1990s, when *ganyu* practices became unglued from local norms of reciprocity and fairness. However, local responses also illustrate the processes of “re-embedding” which can be seen in the emergence of *group ganyu* and *kalimalima-in-clubs*. These syncretic practices (see for example, Galvan 2004) blend network-like qualities of (1) early colonial *kalimalima*; (2) festive labor linked with beer brewing; and (3) the exchange rationalism of *ganyu*. But, more often



than not, it is now difficult to organize people for communal activities since generalized social trust has declined in the Ngoni villages.

ZIAP, however, relies on farmer groups who mobilize according to the voluntary practice of *kalimalima*. Farmer groups have had limited ability to deploy voluntary labor, partly because labor arrangements have become individualized and commodified as seen in *ganyu*, and *kalimalima in clubs* are not viewed as legitimate especially by marginal farmers. These findings, along with those identified in the previous discussion concerning other variables affecting the adoption of improved fallows, suggest that notwithstanding the expectations of policy makers, improved fallows are not yet accessible by the most marginal farmers in these communities who have the least access to agricultural inputs such as fertilizers, but would benefit most from the technology.

A positive finding is that farmer groups in the ZIAP sampled areas are diffused and loosely organized—akin to extended networks that are based on (informal) ties such as kinship, face-to-face relationships such as friendship, belonging to the same *chigava*, etc. The leadership in these farmer groups is not controlled by a few families and membership does not overlap with the dynamics of lineages.

Recent efforts by various international development agencies and NGOs to foster local-level associations reflects their growing interest in “civil society,” the assumption that locally organized activities foster some sort of “civicness.” While such efforts respond to the global “good governance” agenda, what happens on the ground is often very different. This chapter has shown that people tend to act out of circumstances that are very different from those that typically foster “civic” types of associations. The local actors do what they see as best from their own vantage point. This means that sometimes

they act in a cooperative fashion, but at other times they do not. They certainly operate with a much deeper and wider arsenal of options than what many development organizations, such as ICRAF and ZIAP described here, like to assume. Thus, despite the conditions of poverty in which these actors live, their "strategic choices" are not necessarily as tightly constrained as has been thought.

What happens may not be in line with the "noble" development goals that the international development community has committed itself to, like the Millennium Development Goals, but they reflect the vestiges of familiar "pre-capitalist" realities on the ground, which tend to give rise to informal rather than formal institutions. Custom and "traditional" forms of social organization not only prevail, but are also modified in ways that allow the actors to adapt to new situations. Such has been the case with the labor sharing teams. There is an associational sphere that reflects local values and norms and constitutes the arena in which local development takes place. In short, practice is quite different from policy and reality often looks nothing like the mainstream theories concerning local development!

## CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION

This study contributes to the emerging scholarship that argues that informal institutions matter. The questions that propelled the discussion in the previous chapters asked: How are informal institutions mobilized and (re)deployed for development? To what extent and under what conditions do informal institutions hinder the aims and objectives of contemporary development approaches in Botswana and Zambia? Under what circumstances do articulations between imposed formal and informal institutions become the basis for innovation and adaptation and can be supportive of imposed formal market and state institutions?

Based on the illustrations of responses of *Ngoni* farmers and local communities in the Okavango Delta to the implementation of community conservation through CBNRM and the “scaling up” of improved fallows systems by ZIAP, there is no doubt that informal institutions matter. But as has been argued throughout this dissertation it is also important to establish how informal institutions matter and under what circumstances do they matter. The issue is more than simply one of balance or a right mix between markets, states and communities.

### **Formalizing the Informal Realm and Informalizing the Formal Realm**

Chapter 3 illustrated how informal institutions are manifest in the interactions between the external state actors, private sector actors and local *Bayei*, *Humbukushu*, and *Basarwa* ethnic groups in the panhandle villages of the Okavango Delta who have been incorporated in a new community conservation strategy. Such institutional impositions in

the area, however, have a longer history. Since the late 1800s, the dominant *Batawana*, British colonialism, and more recently the post-colonial state have attempted to incorporate these local communities in the wider statist goals and developmental projects.

Even though policy makers present the CBNRM program in technical and apolitical terms, its "implementation" has entailed key fundamental political issues. What one finds are attempts by the state to "formalize the informal realm" under the assumption that standardizing decision making and making it "transparent" would translate into the empowerment of local communities. However, the process of generating benefits from natural resources through a tender process and the proclamation and expectation (in policy documents) about their equitable distribution makes CBNRM an arena where power is exercised, and there is negotiation about not only who gets what when and how, but also about *how people decide* who gets what, when and how.

For local communities, the relationships of kinsperson, relatives, friends and other face-to-face particularistic aspects matter more than the formalist rules of CBNRM. Despite accusations about mishandling money and resources, the leaders of the community trust were not initially reprimanded. Even though CBNRM frames "benefits" in a technocratic language, safari operators (for example, by contributing to and attending the funerals of elites, providing employment, and other material benefits) evoke local idioms of a "chief" and "big man" to manage their relations with local communities. By doing so, safari operators show their benevolence and reinforce an embedded patron-client relationship, which is more familiar and locally meaningful than that of a JVP as an "autonomous" market actor. Market actors thus display their embeddedness by masking their profit motive behind local idioms of reciprocity. Processes of "informalizing the

formal” by investing in social relations and cultivating norms of reciprocity in this case, however, are not developmentally useful. The demands of primary forms of face-to-face reciprocity and re-distributive mechanisms between the safari operator and local communities undermine “progressive” goals of CBNRM. Safari operators create patronage networks to protect their investments, rather than empower local communities to take responsibilities of these projects. This constitutes a wide gap between the formal goals of CBNRM projects and the reality on the ground.

Local communities, however, have not remained passive recipients of these institutional impositions. The hegemony of private market actors is always in flux since it depends on investing in fluid and flexible alliances among different local groups. Their incorporation into the state’s version of CBNRM has presented them with uncertainties as well as opportunities to transform the rules and responsibilities of conservation and development. The infusion of market and state logics through CBNRM and the improved fallows projects is often incomplete. These institutional impositions involve processes of reinvention and appropriation that are historically mediated and culturally constituted where the content of markets, states, and communities, all undergo a transformation. This is illustrated in Chapter 3 in the instance of the renewal and re-tender debate and the creation of BCCT. Relying on their informal networks, younger members of these local communities mobilized to question the performance and terms of their relationship with the safari operator. The elections of the village trust committees also illustrate that the OCT resources belonged to everyone and those who had attempted to use it for private gain were not elected. By evaluating the performance of the safari operator and each other, these remote rural communities were behaving like exchange rational, market

oriented actors, calculating the economic costs and benefits of their relationship with the safari operators. The *Basarwa*, by establishing BCCT, re-work legacies of prior marginalization through the idiom of community based market-friendly conservation strategies to gain access to areas from which they were excluded in the past.

The illustrations from Zambia also highlight how informal institutions matter and under what circumstances. During the pre-colonial and early colonial period, festive work parties were the modal forms of labor relations. These were characterized by horizontal norms of community reciprocity and social support, but were also a mechanism for accumulation and social control by *Ngoni* lineage heads and seniors. Functioning *between exchange and reciprocity*, labor pooling allowed *Ngoni* elites to extract labor power through “tribute,” but embedded in horizontal social ties families, extended kin and neighbors were also able to help each other through these practices.

With agrarian commercialization, the *Ngonis* began “hiring” labor, which created social contestation concerning community norms of support. As notions of “reward” were transformed into “payment,” work parties were no longer sufficient or efficient for these “progressive” farmers. However, early *ganyu* wage-like labor contractual negotiations were shaped not only by the forces of “supply and demand” but also by local norms of social obligation and networks.

During the surfeit of copper in the early colonial period, the *Zambian* one-party state relied on the extensive use of informal networks of patronage that became the basis of garnering societal consent. UNIP played the dual role of the vanguard of the masses as well as a second arm of the state. The only way the state could conceive of bringing about development in the context of a weakly institutionalized and ineffective

bureaucracy, was by co-opting the competing regional and local interests and factions within the party apparatus. During this time, many wealthier *Ngoni* farmers who were part of these patronage networks could “hire” kin members for ganyu wage-like labor without calculating the precise costs and benefits.

The economic crisis that began in the 1970s became entrenched with the onset of structural adjustment programs. In response, local elite *Ngoni* farmers attempted to “dis-embedd” ganyu from social norms of reciprocity and fairness. With the decline in copper prices and structural adjustment programs, the party’s access to resources had dried up, resulting in fewer developmental resources for these rural communities. *Ganyu* became more “market” oriented where it did not matter if someone was a relative or neighbor. This was especially evident through the late 1980s and early 1990s, as *ganyu* practices became “dis-embedded” from local norms of reciprocity and fairness. These days poorer men with low yields and small fields undertake *ganyu* piece-work to survive the current economic crisis.

Over the past several decades, informal norms of community solidarity, fairness, and social support have become fragmented. This fragmentation began with colonialism, continued through the post colonial period via attempts at agricultural intensification, and most recently persisted following structural adjustment-led state withdrawal. The decline in general social trust, exchange and reciprocity arrangements that has come with increased market incorporation does not bode well for the most marginal in the *Ngoni* communities.

Market liberalization in Zambia has not supported the strengthening of an entrepreneurial yeoman farmer class, but instead perpetuated a partially proletarianized

class of farmers. Processes of “dis-embedding” can engender exploitative relationships that negatively affect the goals of development projects, can become the building blocks for further capitalist incorporation, but also can potentially be “re-embedded.” Among the *Ngonis*, the individuation in production relations and the increase in social differentiation has provided the basis for the emergence of new nodes of reciprocity, social solidarity and collective action—*group ganyu* and *kalimalima-in-clubs*. These labor arrangements, which simultaneously involve strategically investing in social relationships and cultivating new shared expectations of reciprocity, have a developmental significance.

In the Ngoni communities, where any demonstration of disparity in wealth leads to strained relations, informal institutions adapt to meet the exigencies of the present. *Group ganyu* has thus emerged as the modal labor arrangement. As the findings in Chapter 4 have illustrated, *group ganyu* work parties were the most common way for mobilizing labor in the *Ngoni* communities. *Group ganyu* is a local adaptation which blends the network like qualities of festive beer brewing, early colonial *kalimalima*, and the exchange rationalism of *ganyu*. The “re-embedding” in the form of *group ganyu* reduces information uncertainties and transaction costs, while simultaneously enhancing the level of trust between different actors in the *Ngoni* communities. This was a “provisional equilibrium” for both the wealthier and the marginal farmers. For wealthier farmers *group ganyu* was a mechanism to demonstrate their norms of community reciprocity and solidarity. By deploying *group ganyu* they were able to display their benevolence to the rest of the community. For those who participate in *group ganyu*, collective labor pooling allow them to escape the alienation of *ganyu* which is now



viewed as an exploitative arrangement, undertaken only by those who have no other recourse.

In Zambia, external state and non-governmental actors overlook the complexity of these institutional articulations. External state agents and governmental organizations deploy the imagery and logic of *kalimalima* to induce participation in local farmer groups and clubs for learning new agricultural techniques, building infrastructure such as seed banks for the clubs, and cultivating in each others fields. In effect, they hope that by relying on lateral solidarity networks evident in the logic of *kalimalima*, labor can be mobilized for developmental activities.

For the marginal farmers, however, *kalimalima-in-clubs* is only a façade of an “exclusive membership” that is evident in the rhetoric of the elites and local NGOs. Among the *Ngonis* there is a distinction between *piaye yekha* and *kazipalili*. Both imply an individualist ethic, but the former denotes individual initiative and enterprise, which is highlighted by the wealthier farmers, while the latter (according to the marginal members of these communities) is manifest in declining social solidarities and trust. For the marginal farmer *kazipalili*, is about how they are cast aside, unable to rely on neighbors or kin for social support. In their interpretation of *kalimalima*, thus instead of supporting the exhortations of lead farmers about “making it on their own,” marginal farmers vilify the behavior of these elites by lamenting about social exclusion and the lack of fairness in distribution. Local wealthier farmers who have capitalized on new development opportunities no longer expect to pay fair wages for *ganyu*. However, they cannot escape the norms of communities. By deploying *kalimalima-in-clubs* they are able to access

development resources and also exemplify the goals of participation and empowerment for external development actors.

Interestingly, when the leader of a local farmer group provides resources to his family, kin members, or neighbors, those who are left out do not designate this as corruption. For them, this is interpreted as a local patron who has not followed community norms. At the same time, they also recognize that since the resources that are being distributed are scarce, not everyone will receive equal access. Both in Botswana and in Zambia, marginal members of the community rely on symbolic vilification, by admonishing elites at the *kgotla* (in Botswana), and not participating in *kalimalima-in-clubs* (in Zambia).

Notwithstanding the developmental significance of these practices, it is important to recognize that older logics of social organization became the raw materials for the creation of new institutional practices. The trajectories of labor mobilization thus point to a high degree of "local inventiveness" suggesting that we should avoid searching for any pre-established sequences of institutional change.

These findings suggest that distinct pre-capitalist structures not only may but often do very strongly persist in the face of new methods of production, thus presenting a fundamental disarticulation in the process of capitalist penetration and wholesale transformation of pre-capitalist structures. Because of this, the idea that there is one, ideal, unitary path for the "evolution" of labor exchange, or "modernization" for that matter, in rural Africa should be rejected. Labor exchange mechanisms neither advance teleologically toward some individualistic free market goal, nor do they regress pathologically toward the economy of affection. In short, they adapt and create new

“syncretisms” that, if taken into consideration, can be used either positively or negatively by all of the actors involved, including not only rural communities, but also external state and NGOs who are involved in *planning* their lives.

Given these results, what could be done differently by external organizations such as ICRAF and ZIAP? Clearly, we need to take the cue from the “multiple trajectories” of labor commodification. If farmers are expected to adopt new agricultural technologies, they will need material incentives including new varieties of seeds, credit and fertilizer. However, *equally if not more critical* is that while incentives are important, more thought must be given to combining material incentives with *legitimate* patterns of labor mobilization such as *group ganyu*. Such a strategy that combines material incentives with the logic of social relations of a pre-capitalist mode can provide “success.”

### **Analytics of Informal Institutions**

The “analytic narratives” in this study are those *between exchange and reciprocity*, implying that both instrumental and affective aspects are involved. Informal institutions include shared beliefs about the rights and obligations of others and an expectation of reciprocity, as well as a strategic aspect of calculated investments in social relations. Embedding in informal institutions, from this perspective, have differential effects depending on the context. It could encourage or undercut formal explicit and codified rules of imposed market and state institutions. The different illustrations provide discrete insights about the way in which informal institutions matter, whether they complement, substitute, co-opt, reject, or are mutually constituted through their interactions with the formal realm.

The fundamental problem of the pro-market neoliberal approach was that it did not take seriously the interface between economy and society or the institutional logics of

different actors. By taking "markets" as given and disregarding the fundamental role of the informal institutions—the arena of culturally embedded practices, norms, and values—these policy reforms floundered against the local realities of African societies.

In response to the neoliberal Washington Consensus, the neoinstitutional turn within economics alternatively proposes that both the state and market are essential mechanisms for social coordination, but they work best when they are grounded in informal institutions. Development, it seems, is now about figuring out the right mix of institutions where along with the "market," devolving responsibility away from the state to include informal norms of "community" is seen as an alternative mechanism for solving market and state failures and as a critical ingredient for success.

From this perspective, informal institutions viewed as demands of primary face-to-face reciprocity and re-distributive mechanisms inherent in "community," while necessary in the short term, serve to undermine the formal institutional realm and rational pursuit of instrumental goals and must be eventually transcended. In "personal exchange" where players know each other and have built reputations through repeated interactions, there are low transaction costs. But for large scale economic activity, the reputation mechanisms of "personal exchange" fail. The solution, to realize the gains from economic activities, is to move toward "impersonal exchange" that is mediated by third party enforcement through a legal rational state. As the thinking goes, the formal institutions and organizations provide the crucial ingredient for improved performance. Based on this interpretation, it is argued that "Development" has passed Africa, as well as other non-western societies, because "formal" vectors of modernity—free markets and liberal democracies are rejected by these societies. But the neoinstitutional turn, while

necessary, views informal institutions through a Eurocentric lens characterizing them as residual features within the development process.

But at hand here is not only whether non-western societies can take the same path to “impersonal exchange” that evolved in Western Europe, but also whether or not they *should* take this path. It is important to ask whether, irrespective of the historical context, human agency is culturally shaped or if there is a universal instrumental rationality that guides it? If rationality is culturally embedded, are norms, values, and beliefs exogenous to “rational” decision-making or endogenous to the process?

According to Gillian Hart, the cul-de-sac in development is the inability to differentiate and problematize “big D/little d” development. Big “D” development which is associated with the CBNRM in Botswana and the improved fallows projects in Zambia, is linked to the interventionist project that emerged in the post World War II period of decolonization and the Cold War. “Development” may have been projected as a universal process that can be planned and guided by states, or more recently that argues for the importance of markets and communities. Little “d” development, on the other hand, refers to the uneven and contradictory spread of modernity and capitalism (Hart 2001; 2002). Recognizing the unevenness in the trajectory of modernity and capitalism, and local responses to such impositions, allows us to take a more pragmatic and nuanced view about the relationship between formal and informal institutions.

The failures of conservation and development approaches in Africa and elsewhere are not the result of “bad” institutions. The dissertation transcends this cul-de-sac by arguing that institutions, especially informal institutions, are indeed a critical aspect for understanding the prospects for conservation and development. Market integration, in a

context of state withdrawal or decentralization of decision-making, generates new relationships among community, market and state actors, and it has diverse impacts on collective action arrangements, social exchange patterns, and the nature and mobilization of social trust.

Through the examples of CBNRM and improved fallows we see that, unlike what is assumed by the dominant policy approaches, the infusion of market and state logics is often incomplete. As communities, bureaucrats, and firms develop new rules to conserve wildlife and alter agricultural practices, state and market structures become embedded in institutional and cultural patterns of African communities in new ways. These articulations, historically mediated and culturally constituted, involve processes of reinvention and re-appropriation. Based on the findings of this study there should be no doubt that informal institutions matter. Furthermore, the study establishes under what circumstances can they be supportive of or detract from conservation and development goals.

### **Development Trajectories**

In contrasting the nature of post colonial state building and consolidation in Botswana and Zambia, it is apparent that a receding Zambian state and Botswana's developmental state with its minimal patrimonial tendencies each pose different challenges for regulating and guiding bottom-up decentralized community approaches and market integration. Does the nature of the state make a difference for the prospects of community conservation and local democratic governance?

The Zambian state exemplifies the common characterization of the post-colonial African personal state—a “lame leviathan” which has been “excessively authoritarian,

but inadequately authoritative” and remains weak by conventional measures of institutional capacity. If Bayart's notion of the “politics of the belly” offers the image of the greedy state that is captured by incumbent elites, Hyden's “economy of affection” emphasizes the strategic importance of the culturally embedded rationality of societal actors who legitimize the state through patronage relations. While not in the same league as Mobutu's Zaire, the post-colonial Zambian state has historically served as an instrument for extracting resources to the benefit of those who control it and relations with society have remained tributary rather than productive. Due to the weakness of the state in Zambia and “marketization” of society, the need for non-market informal social relations is increasingly important to solve collective problems, especially for the most marginal groups of society. However, informal affective networks such as those associated with pooling have scaled-down and instead become verticalized. In the absence of a viable state, marginal members of *Ngoni* communities turn to local elites. Elite *Ngoni* farmers, unable to provide resources, instead opt to pursue individual gain, often at the cost of community reciprocity, thus widening the gap between the elites and the poor. Without a strong state to provide resources and opportunities for the poor, local elites are more likely to capture scarce development resources which in turn provokes new tensions and even outright animosity within these communities.

With its blend of developmentalism evident in a reasonably well-managed national economy that relies on diamond wealth and authoritarian tendencies, Botswana's high-modernist state tends to encapsulate and capture local practices under official ideologies of development. By so doing, it creates conditions where conflicts generated by CBNRM have been exacerbated and community organizations have to negotiate fluctuating ties

between market actors and local elites. In the long term, however, the potential for development success in Botswana is perhaps greater if the state allows for local improvisation and experimentation because it leaves room for the local actors to maneuver.

### **Understanding Conservation and Development Approaches in Africa**

The illustrations in the dissertation thus trace institutional patterns and organizational capacities that emerge through the articulation of imposed and pre-existing institutional logics. The importance of local actors is a critical ingredient for making development work. However, the illustrations of community strategies highlight a central dilemma of participatory development. The need for “bottom-up” strategies emerged primarily because of the ineffectiveness of state led, top-down approaches. However, participatory development needs an active intervention by effective states to be successful (see for example, Evans 1996; Platteau 2004).

Communities also look very different depending on location or scale. As Peter Brosius has pointed out:

The idea of community is never unproblematic. Among the most persistent difficulties in addressing the idea of community is not simply challenging romantic representations of community as exemplars of organic harmony, but of arriving at a common understanding of how to even define this entity...[and being attentive to] *how* communities get constituted in conservation discourse and *who* does the constituting (Brosius 2002, 2).

This dissertation thus also contributes to the ongoing discussion and re-evaluation of community approaches. Experience to date, including evidence provided in this dissertation, confirms that there is no such thing as “one size fits all.” While top-down approaches miss local nuances, communal approaches alone are not necessarily the only way to implement conservation strategies either. It is also important to differentiate



“community” approaches, which are introduced within the international project mode and implemented as short-term projects and programs with a wide range of acronyms (each with varying emphasis on what was meant by community and conservation) from the broader claim about the importance of local level empowerment and participation (Murphree 2004).

Since the relationship between economic incentives for development and conservation outcomes is politically determined, community-based approaches can become mechanisms for more powerful external state or private sector actors to appropriate local resources. But they also have the potential to motivate local collective action, entrepreneurship, and resource management, thus enabling local people to exercise more control over their own future. This does not mean, however, that focusing on the local level alone is adequate in achieving conservation and development objectives. Local actors by themselves cannot address the challenges of conservation development. For community conservation and development to work, one needs to pay attention to processes above the level of these communities, as well as below the level of stylized notions of community—the arena of competing and overlapping interests and actors. Effective conservation approaches, while grounded in “community” and attentive to participation, should incorporate an understanding of wider processes and structures, and especially how state and market structures become “embedded” in institutional and cultural patterns of local communities in new ways.

Through the 1980s and the 1990s, bottom-up participatory models of conservation proliferated. More recently, a “backlash” has resulted in a new generation of “protectionist” eco-regional approaches that view local participation and equity concerns

as diluting the main goals of conservation. Instead, the goal now is to assign monetary values to ecosystem services, which can then be tapped by the “market.”

If bureaucratic homogeneity and social engineering evinced in state simplification assume away local difference and practices, market-driven standardization also reduces social processes to a single metric of profit or loss. Despite their differing theoretical proclivities, both James Scott and Douglas North have argued that “the market” is socially constituted. As Scott suggests:

The market is itself an instituted, formal system of coordination.... dependent on a larger system of social relations which its own calculus does not acknowledge...create nor maintain. Here I have in mind not only the obvious elements of contract and property law, as well as the state's coercive power to enforce them, *but antecedent patterns and norms of social trust, community, and co-operation, without which market exchange is inconceivable* [italics my emphasis]. (Scott 1998, 315)

If extreme statism has its perils, than those who reify markets also risk succumbing to “market simplifications.” One can only wonder whether there is accumulation of knowledge in conservation and development practice.

As we have also seen through the examples of CBNRM and improved fallows, unlike what is assumed by the dominant policy approaches, the infusion of market and state logic is often incomplete. Pre-capitalist, reciprocal-personalistic structures can be viewed as raw materials and serve as the basis to provide alternative forms of institutions of modernity/development. Encounters with imposed western market and political forces do not engender passive incorporation, but involve local “agency” and new institutional logics emerge from the conflicts and contestation among actors and can be located in particular critical sites of practice.

Thus, conservation and development approaches should view rural Africa not as falling into a pre-determined path toward modernity where the pre-capitalist past is

simply a vestige of history. It should be viewed rather as a site where social and institutional processes are constantly being (re)formed through the interactions between formal institutions of modernity—capitalist market structures and legal-rational statist institutions—and informal institutions.

APPENDIX A  
SUMMARY OF DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Table A-1 Description of summary statistics

Variable Name	No (0)	Yes (1)
Has planted IF trees	75 (67%)	37 (33%)
Respondent or someone in HH is member of group/cooperative	35 (31%)	77 (69%)
Done <i>ganyu</i> in past year	83 (74%)	29 (26%)
Owns cattle	62 (63%)	1-4 cattle=20 (20%)
		5-8 cattle=10 (10%)
		10-32 cattle=6 (6%)
Has dimba	15 (13%)	97 (87%)
Respondent or someone in household (HH) has done <i>kalimalimi/chibili</i> last year	75 (67%)	37 (33%)
Hired <i>ganyu</i> in last year	75 (67%)	37 (33%)
Respondent or someone in HH has done group <i>ganyu</i> in last year	33 (29%)	79 (71%)
Currently has IF trees in fields	84 (75%)	28 (25%)
Has ever planted IF trees	75 (67%)	37 (33%)
Is head of household (HH)	30 (27%)	82 (73%)
Has done <i>ganyu</i> in last year	83 (74%)	29 (26%)
Respondent or someone in HH has done <i>kalimalima-in-clubs</i> in last year	70 (86%)	11 (14%)
Uses animal traction to plough his/her fields	96 (86%)	16 (14%)
Owns a bike	9 (8%)	103 (92%)
Owns an ox-cart	74 (66%)	38 (34%)
Owns a plough	55 (49%)	57 (51%)
Has an iron roof	107 (65%)	5 (5%)
Sends children to school	46 (46%)	55 (55%)

For each of these variables above, N=112 with the exception of “respondent or someone in household has done *kalimalima-in-clubs* in the last year” and “sends children to school.” For the *kalimalima-in-clubs* variable the N=81 because *kalimalima-in-clubs*

was a new practice at the time and those who did not respond were usually unaware of it.

For the variable measuring education the N=101 with 11 no responses.

Table A-2 Range and mean of variables used in statistical analysis

Variables	Range	Mean	N
Age	17 to 74 years	36 years	104
Owns Cattle	0 to 32 cattle	2	98
Field Size	0 to 8 hectares	1 hectare	106
Formal Education	0 to 12 years	5 years	102

Table A-3 Do people in the village trust each other?

	No	Yes	N
People in village trust each other	77 (69%)	31 (28%)	108

Table A-4 Has trust improved, gotten worse, stayed same?

	Gotten better	Stayed same	Gotten worse	N
In last few years trust has gotten better, worse or stayed same	35 (31%) better	19 (17%) same	57 (51%) worse	111

APPENDIX B  
TRANSFORMATION OF LABOR ARRANGEMENTS

Table B-1 Labor exchange mechanisms 1890s-2001

Labor exchange mechanisms among the Ngonis in Eastern Province (1890s-2001)						
Time period	Family/ Household Labor (HHL)	Festive beer parties	Tribute labor	Classical Kalimalima		
1890- 1950s	HHL	Festive beer parties	Tribute labor	Classical Kalimalima	Ganyu	
1950- 1970s	HHL	Scaled down festive beer parties	Scaled down tribute labor	Scaled down Kalimalima	Early 'embedded' Ganyu: Social insurance mechanism to survive within a monetized economy, but nested in social networks, mechanism for domination and expropriate labor power.	
1970s- 1990s	HHL			Scaled down Kalimalima	Group Ganyu (blends cooperative pre- capitalist labor pooling & market demand) emerged from "below" ▲	Kalimalima in Clubs (taps into logic of solidarity of classic kalimalima for development) ▲ re-introduced from the "top" by development practitioners, and state, vilified, limited mobilizing potential
1990s-	HHL				Ganyu becoming "disembedd ed" from social relations/ more like wage labor	legitimate worthy of personal sacrifice

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## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Parakh Hoon spent his early childhood on the campus of the University of Rajasthan in Jaipur, India where his mother was a professor. After completing high school at St Xavier's school in Jaipur, he moved to St. Stephen's College in Delhi for a B.A. degree. In 1994, he started an M.A. at the School of International Studies at Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), also in New Delhi. While pursuing the master's degree at JNU, he developed his intellectual and normative interests in environmental and development issues, especially a concern for the comparative experiences of post colonial societies. To further pursue these interests, he attended an inter-disciplinary program in International Development program at Brigham Young University (BYU) in Utah. For the master's thesis research, he was awarded a grant from BYU's Kennedy Center and worked on environmental scarcity and ethnic conflict between Asamiya Hindus and Muslims in northeastern India. He moved to the University of Florida to pursue a Ph.D. in political science where he began focusing on environment and development issues in Africa. While completing his Ph.D. he worked on an interdisciplinary project on Sustainable Livelihoods in collaboration with the United Nations Development Program, and another with the United States Agency of International Development's Collaborative Project on the adoption of new agroforestry technologies in Zambia. He also spent over 18 months doing field research in Botswana's Okavango Delta and Zambia's Eastern Province. He moved to Washington DC in 2004 to take up a visiting academic position at American University and received his Ph.D. in August 2005.